

# Bunyan Characters

A.W.



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AUTHOR OF 'CHARACTERS AND

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# BUNYAN CHARACTERS

## I

### THE BOOK

'—the book of the wars of the Lord.'—*Moses.*

 OHN BUNYAN'S *Holy War* was first published in 1682, six years before its illustrious author's death. Bunyan wrote this great book when he was still in all the fulness of his intellectual power and in all the ripeness of his spiritual experience. The *Holy War* is not the *Pilgrim's Progress*—there is only one *Pilgrim's Progress*. At the same time, we have Lord Macaulay's word for it that if the *Pilgrim's Progress* did not exist the *Holy War* would be the best allegory that ever was written: and even Mr. Froude admits that the *Holy War* alone would have entitled its author to rank high up among the acknowledged masters of English literature. The intellectual rank of the *Holy War* has been fixed before that tribunal over which our accomplished and competent critics preside; but for a full appreciation of its religious rank and value we would need to hear the glad testimonies of tens of thousands of God's saints, whose hard-beset faith and obedience have been kindled and sustained by

the study of this noble book. The *Pilgrim's Progress* sets forth the spiritual life under the scriptural figure of a long and an uphill journey. The *Holy War*, on the other hand, is a military history; it is full of soldiers and battles, defeats and victories. And its devout author had much more scriptural suggestion and support in the composition of the *Holy War* than he had even in the composition of the *Pilgrim's Progress*. For Holy Scripture is full of wars and rumours of wars: the wars of the Lord; the wars of Joshua and the Judges; the wars of David, with his and many other magnificent battle-songs; till the best known name of the God of Israel in the Old Testament is the Lord of Hosts; and then in the New Testament we have Jesus Christ described as the Captain of our salvation. Paul's powerful use of armour and of armed men is familiar to every student of his epistles; and then the whole Bible is crowned with a book all sounding with the battle-cries, the shouts, and the songs of soldiers, till it ends with that city of peace where they hang the trumpet in the hall and study war no more. Military metaphors had taken a powerful hold of our author's imagination even in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, as his portraits of Greatheart and Valiant-for-truth and other soldiers sufficiently show; while the conflict with Apollyon and the destruction of Doubting Castle are so many sure preludes of the coming *Holy War*. Bunyan's early experiences in the great Civil War had taught him many memorable things about the military art; memorable and suggestive things that he afterwards put to the

most splendid use in the siege, the capture, and the subjugation of Mansoul.

The *Divine Comedy* is beyond dispute the greatest book of personal and experimental religion the world has ever seen. The consuming intensity of its author's feelings about sin and holiness, the keenness and the bitterness of his remorse, and the rigour and the severity of his revenge, his superb intellect and his universal learning, all set ablaze by his splendid imagination—all that combines to make the *Divine Comedy* the unapproachable masterpiece it is. John Bunyan, on the other hand, had no learning to be called learning, but he had a strong and a healthy English understanding, a conscience and a heart wholly given up to the life of the best religion of his religious day, and then, by sheer dint of his sanctified and soaring imagination and his exquisite style, he stands forth the peer of the foremost men in the intellectual world. And thus it is that the great unlettered religious world possesses in John Bunyan all but all that the select and scholarly world possesses in Dante. Both Dante and Bunyan devoted their splendid gifts to the noblest of services—the service of spiritual, and especially of personal religion; but for one appreciative reader that Dante has had Bunyan has had a hundred. Happy in being so like his Master in so many things, Bunyan is happy in being like his unlettered Master in this also, that the common people hear him gladly and never weary of hearing him.

It gives by far its noblest interest to Dante's noble book that we have Dante himself in every

page of his book. Dante is taken down into Hell, he is then led up through Purgatory, and after that still up and up into the very Paradise of God. But that hell all the time is the hell that Dante had dug and darkened and kindled for himself. In the *Purgatory*, again, we see Dante working out his own salvation with fear and trembling, God all the time working in Dante to will and to do of His good pleasure. And then the Paradise, with all its sevenfold glory, is just that place and that life which God hath prepared for them that love Him and serve Him as Dante did. And so it is in the *Holy War*. John Bunyan is in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, but there are more men and other men than its author in that rich and populous book, and other experiences and other attainments than his. But in the *Holy War* we have Bunyan himself as fully and as exclusively as we have Dante in the *Divine Comedy*. In the first edition of the *Holy War* there is a frontispiece conceived and executed after the anatomical and symbolical manner which was so common in that day, and which is to be seen at its perfection in the English edition of Jacob Behmen. The frontispiece is a full-length likeness of the author of the *Holy War*, with his whole soul laid open and his hidden heart 'anatomised.' Why, asked Wordsworth, and Matthew Arnold in our day has echoed the question—why does Homer still so live and rule without a rival in the world of letters? And they answer that it is because he always sang with his eye so fixed upon its object. 'Homer, to thee I turn.' And so it was with Dante. And so it was with Bunyan. Bunyan's *Holy War* has its great

and abiding and commanding power over us just because he composed it with his eye fixed on his own heart.

My readers, I have somewhat else to do,  
Than with vain stories thus to trouble you ;  
What here I say some men do know so well  
They can with tears and joy the story tell . . .  
Then lend thine ear to what I do relate,  
Touching the town of Mansoul and her state :  
For my part, I (myself) was in the town,  
Both when 'twas set up and when pulling down.  
Let no man then count me a fable-maker,  
Nor make my name or credit a partaker  
Of their derision : what is here in view  
Of mine own knowledge, I dare say is true.

The characters in the *Holy War* are not as a rule nearly so clear-cut or so full of dramatic life and movement as their fellows are in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and Bunyan seems to have felt that to be the case. He shows all an author's fondness for the children of his imagination in the *Pilgrim's Progress*. He returns to and he lingers on their doings and their sayings and their very names with all a foolish father's fond delight. While, on the other hand, when we look to see him in his confidential addresses to his readers returning upon some of the military and municipal characters in the *Holy War*, to our disappointment he does not so much as name a single one of them, though he dwells with all an author's self-delectation on the outstanding scenes, situations, and episodes of his remarkable book.

What, then, are some of the more outstanding scenes, situations, and episodes, as well as military and municipal characters, in the book now before

us? And what are we to promise ourselves, and to expect, from the study and the exposition of the *Holy War* in these lectures? Well, to begin with, we shall do our best to enter with mind, and heart, and conscience, and imagination into Bunyan's great conception of the human soul as a city, a fair and a delicate city and corporation, with its situation, surroundings, privileges and fortunes. We shall then enter under his guidance into the famous and stately palace of this metropolitan city; a palace which for strength might be called a castle, for pleasantness a paradise, and for largeness a place so copious as to contain all the world. The walls and the gates of the city will then occupy and instruct us for several Sabbath evenings, after which we shall enter on the record of the wars and battles that rolled time after time round those city walls, and surged up through its captured gates till they quite overwhelmed the very palace of the king itself. Then we shall spend, God willing, one Sabbath evening with Loth-to-stoop, and another with old Ill-pause, the devil's orator, and another with Captain Anything, and another with Lord Willbewill, and another with that notorious villain Clip-promise, by whose doings so much of the king's coin had been abused, and another with that so angry and so ill-conditioned churl old Mr. Prejudice, with his sixty deaf men under him. Dear Mr. Wet-eyes, with his rope upon his head, will have a fit congregation one winter night, and Captain Self-denial another. We shall have another painful but profitable evening before a communion

season with Mr. Prywell, and so we shall eat of that bread and drink of that cup. Emmanuel's livery will occupy us one evening, Mansoul's Magna Charta another, and her annual Feast-day another. Her Established Church and her beneficed clergy will take up one evening, some Skulkers in Mansoul another, the devil's last prank another, and then, to wind up with, Emmanuel's last speech and charge to Mansoul from his chariot-step till He comes again to accomplish her rapture. All that we shall see and take part in ; unless, indeed, our Captain comes in anger before the time, and spears us to the earth when He finds us asleep at our post or in the act of sin at it, which may His abounding mercy forbid !

And now take these three forewarnings and precautions.

1. First:—All who come here on these coming Sabbath evenings will not understand the *Holy War* all at once, and many will not understand it at all. And little blame to them, and no wonder. For, fully to understand this deep and intricate book demands far more mind, far more experience, and far more specialised knowledge than the mass of men, as men are, can possibly bring to it. This so exacting book demands of us, to begin with, some little acquaintance with military engineering and architecture ; with the theory of, and if possible with some practice in, attack and defence in sieges and storms, winter campaigns and long drawn-out wars. And then, impossible as it sounds and is, along with all that we would need to have a really

profound, practical, and at first-hand acquaintance with the anatomy of the human subject, and especially with cardiac anatomy, as well as with all the conditions, diseases, regimen and discipline of the corrupt heart of man. And then it is enough to terrify any one to open this book or to enter this church when he is told that if he comes here he must be ready and willing to have the whole of this terrible and exacting book fulfilled and experienced in himself, in his own body and in his own soul.

2. And, then, you will not all like the *Holy War*. The mass of men could not be expected to like any such book. How could the vain and blind citizen of a vain and blind city like to be wakened up, as Paris was wakened up within our own remembrance, to find all her gates in the hands of an iron-hearted enemy? And how could her sons like to be reminded, as they sit in their wine gardens, that they are thereby fast preparing their city for that threatened day when she is to be hung up on her own walls and bled to the white? Who would not hate and revile the book or the preacher who prophesied such rough things as that? Who could love the author or the preacher who told him to his face that his eyes and his ears and all the passes to his heart were already in the hands of a cruel, ruthless, and masterful enemy? No wonder that you never read the *Holy War*. No wonder that the bulk of men have never once opened it. *The Downfall* is not a favourite book in the night-gardens of Paris.

3. And then, few, very few, it is to be feared, will be any better of the *Holy War*. For, to be any better of such a terrible book as this is, we must at all costs lay it, and lay it all, and lay it all at once, to heart. We must submit ourselves to see ourselves continually in its blazing glass. We must stoop to be told that it is all, in all its terrors and in all its horrors, literally true of ourselves. We must deliberately and resolutely set open every gate that opens in on our heart—Ear-gate and Eye-gate and all the gates of sense and intellect, day and night, to Jesus Christ to enter in; and we must shut and bolt and bar every such gate in the devil's very face, and in the face of all his scouts and orators, day and night also. But who that thinks, and that knows by experience what all that means, will feel himself sufficient for all that? No man: no sinful man. But, among many other noble and blessed things, the *Holy War* will show us that our sufficiency in this impossibility also is all of God. Who, then, will enlist? Who will risk all and enlist? Who will matriculate in the military school of Mansoul? Who will submit himself to all the severity of its divine discipline? Who will be made willing to throw open and to keep open his whole soul, with all the gates and doors thereof, to all the sieges, assaults, capitulations, submissions, occupations, and such like of the war of gospel holiness? And who will enlist under that banner now?

'Set down my name, sir,' said a man of a very stout countenance to him who had the inkhorn at the outer gate. At which those who walked

upon the top of the palace broke out in a very pleasant voice,

‘Come in, come in ;  
Eternal glory thou shalt win.’

We have no longer, after what we have come through, any such stoutness in our countenance, yet will we say to-night with him who had it, Set down my name also, sir !

## II

THE CITY OF MANSOUL AND ITS  
CINQUE PORTS

‘—a besieged city.’—*Isaiah*.



OUR greatest historians have been wont to leave their books behind them and to make long journeys in order to see with their own eyes the ruined sites of ancient cities and the famous fields where the great battles of the world were lost and won. We all remember how Macaulay made a long winter journey to see the Pass of Killiecrankie before he sat down to write upon it; and Carlyle's magnificent battle-pieces are not all imagination; even that wonderful writer had to see Frederick's battlefields with his own eyes before he could trust himself to describe them. And he tells us himself how Cromwell's splendid generalship all came up before him as he looked down on the town of Dunbar and out upon the ever-memorable country round about it. John Bunyan was not a great historian; he was only a common soldier in the great Civil War of the seventeenth century; but what would we not give for a description from his vivid pen of the famous fields and the great sieges in which he took part? What a find John Bunyan's 'Journals' and 'Letters Home from the Seat of War' would be to our historians and to

their readers! But, alas! such journals and letters do not exist. Bunyan's complete silence in all his books about the battles and the sieges he took his part in is very remarkable, and his silence is full of significance. The Puritan soldier keeps all his military experiences to work them all up into his *Holy War*, the one and only war that ever kindled all his passions and filled his every waking thought. But since John Bunyan was a man of genius, equal in his own way to Cromwell and Milton themselves, if I were a soldier I would keep ever before me the great book in which Bunyan's experiences and observations and reflections as a soldier are all worked up. I would set that classical book on the same shelf with Cæsar's *Commentaries* and Napier's *Peninsula*, and Carlyle's glorious battle-pieces. Even Cæsar has been accused of too great dryness and coldness in his *Commentaries*, but there is neither dryness nor coldness in John Bunyan's *Holy War*. To read Bunyan kindles our cold civilian blood like the waving of a banner and like the sound of a trumpet.

The situation of the city of Mansoul occupies one of the most beautiful pages of this whole book. The opening of the *Holy War*, simply as a piece of English, is worthy to stand beside the best page of the *Pilgrim's Progress* itself, and what more can I say than that? Now, the situation of a city is a matter of the very first importance. Indeed, the insight and the foresight of the great statesmen and the great soldiers of past ages are seen in nothing more than in the sites they chose for their citadels and for their defenced cities. Well, then, as to

the situation of Mansoul, 'it lieth,' says our military author, 'just between the two worlds.' That is to say : very much as Germany in our day lies between France and Russia, and very much as Palestine in her day lay between Egypt and Assyria, so does Mansoul lie between two immense empires also. And, surely, I do not need to explain to any man here who has a man's soul in his bosom that the two armed empires that besiege his soul are Heaven above and Hell beneath, and that both Heaven and Hell would give their best blood and their best treasure to subdue and to possess his soul. We do not value our souls at all as Heaven and Hell value them. There are savage tribes in Africa and in Asia who inhabit territories that are sleeplessly envied by the expanding and extending nations of Europe. Ancient and mighty empires in Europe raise armies, and build navies, and levy taxes, and spill the blood of their bravest sons like water in order to possess the harbours, and the rivers, and the mountains, and the woods amid which their besotted owners roam in utter ignorance of all the plots and preparations of the Western world. And Heaven and Hell are not unlike those ancient and over-peopled nations of Europe whose teeming millions must have an outlet to other lands. Their life and their activity are too large and too rich for their original territories, and thus they are compelled to seek out colonies and dependencies, so that their surplus population may have a home. And, in like manner, Heaven is too full of love and of blessedness to have all that for ever shut up within itself, and Hell is too full of envy and ill-

will ; and thus there continually come about those contentions and collisions of which the *Holy War* is full. And, besides, it is with Mansoul and her neighbour states of Heaven and Hell just as it is with some of our great European empires in this also. There is no neutral zone, no buffer state, no silver streak between Mansoul and her immediate and military neighbours. And thus it is that her statesmen, and her soldiers, and even her very common-soldier sentries must be for ever on the watch ; they must never say peace, peace ; they must never leave for one moment their appointed post.

And then, as for the wall of the city, hear our excellent historian's own words about that. 'The wall of the town was well built,' so he says. 'Yea, so fast and firm was it knit and compact together that, had it not been for the townsmen themselves, it could not have been shaken or broken down for ever. For here lay the excellent wisdom of Him that builded Mansoul, that the walls could never be broken down nor hurt by the most mighty adverse potentate unless the townsmen gave their consent thereto.' Now, what would the military engineers of Chatham and Paris and Berlin, who are now at their wits' end, not give for a secret like that ! A wall impregnable and insurmountable and not to be sapped or mined from the outside : a wall that could only suffer hurt from the inside ! And then that wonderful wall was pierced from within with five magnificently answerable gates. That is to say, the gates could neither be burst in nor any way forced from without. 'This famous town of Mansoul

had five gates, in at which to come, out of which to go; and these were made likewise answerable to the walls; to wit, impregnable, and such as could never be opened or forced but by the will and leave of those within. The names of the gates were these: Ear-gate, Eye-gate, Mouth-gate; in short, 'the five senses,' as we say.

In the south of England, in the time of Edward the Confessor and after the battle of Hastings, there were five cities which had special immunities and peculiar privileges bestowed upon them, in recognition of the special dangers to which they were exposed and the eminent services they performed as facing the hostile shores of France. Owing to their privileges and their position, the 'Cinque Ports' came to be cities of great strength, till, as time went on, they became a positive weakness rather than a strength to the land that lay behind them. Privilege bred pride, and in their pride the Cinque Ports proclaimed wars and formed alliances on their own account: piracies by sea and robberies by land were hatched within their walls; and it took centuries to reduce those pampered and arrogant ports to the safe and peaceful rank of ordinary English cities. The Revolution of 1688 did something, and the Reform Bill of 1832 did more to make Dover and her insolent sisters like the other free and equal cities of England; but to this day there are remnants of public shows and pageantries left in those old towns sufficient to witness to the former privileges, power, and pride of the famous Cinque Ports. Now, Mansoul, in like manner, has her cinque ports. And the whole of

the *Holy War* is one long and detailed history of how the five senses are clothed with such power as they possess; how they abuse and misuse their power; what disloyalty and despite they show to their sovereign; what conspiracies and depredations they enter into; what untold miseries they let in upon themselves and upon the land that lies behind them; what years and years of siege, legislation, and rule it takes to reduce our bodily senses, those proud and licentious gates, to their true and proper allegiance, and to make their possessors a people loyal and contented, law-abiding and happy.

The Apostle has a terrible passage to the Corinthians, in which he treats of the soul and the senses with tremendous and overwhelming power. 'Your bodies and your bodily members,' he argues, with crushing indignation, 'are not your own to do with them as you like. Your bodies and your souls are both Christ's. He has bought your body and your soul at an incalculable cost. What! know ye not that your body is nothing less than the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, and ye are not any more your own? know ye not that your bodies are the very members of Christ?' And then he says a thing so terrible that I tremble to transcribe it. For a more terrible thing was never written. 'Shall I then,' filled with shame he demands, 'take the members of Christ and make them the members of an harlot?' O God, have mercy on me! I knew all the time that I was abusing and polluting myself, but I did not know, I did not think, I was never told that I was abusing and polluting Thy Son, Jesus Christ. Oh, too awful thought. And yet,

stupid sinner that I am, I had often read that if any man defile the temple of God and the members of Christ, him shall God destroy. O God, destroy me not as I see now that I deserve. Spare me that I may cleanse and sanctify myself and the members of Christ in me, which I have so often embruted and defiled. Assist me to summon up my imagination henceforth to my sanctification as Thine apostle has here taught me the way. Let me henceforth look at my whole body in all its senses and in all its members, the most open and the most secret, as in reality no more my own. Let me henceforth look at myself with Paul's deep and holy eyes. Let me henceforth seat Christ, my Redeemer and my King, in the very throne of my heart, and then keep every gate of my body and every avenue of my mind as all not any more mine own but His. Let me open my eye, and my ear, and my mouth, as if in all that I were opening Christ's eye and Christ's ear and Christ's mouth; and let me thrust in nothing on Him as He dwells within me that will make Him ashamed or angry, or that will defile and pollute Him. That thought, O God, I feel that it will often arrest me in time to come in the very act of sin. It will make me start back before I make Christ cruel or false, a wine-bibber, a glutton, or unclean. I feel at this moment as if I shall yet come to ask Him at every meal, and at every other opportunity and temptation of every kind, what He would have and what He would do before I go on to take or to do anything myself. What a check, what a restraint, what an awful scrupulosity that will henceforth work in me! But, through that,

what a pure, blameless, noble, holy and heavenly life I shall then lead! What bodily pains, diseases, premature decays; what mental remorse, what shames and scandals, what self-loathings and what self-disgusts, what cups bitterer to drink than blood, I shall then escape! Yes, O Paul, I shall henceforth hold with thee that my body is the temple of Christ, and that I am not my own, but that I am bought with a transporting price, and can, therefore, do nothing less than glorify God in my body and in my spirit which are God's. 'This place,' says the Pauline author of the *Holy War*—'This place the King intended but for Himself alone, and not for another with Him.'

But, my brethren, lay this well, and as never before, to heart—this, namely, that when you thus begin to keep any gate for Christ, your King and Captain and Better-self,—Ear-gate, or Eye-gate, or Mouth-gate, or any other gate—you will have taken up a task that shall have no end with you in this life. Till you begin in dead earnest to watch your heart, and all the doors of your heart, as if you were watching Christ's heart for Him and all the doors of His heart, you will have no idea of the arduousness and the endurance, the sleeplessness and the self-denial, of the undertaking.

'Mansoul! Her wars seemed endless in her eyes;  
 She's lost by one, becomes another's prize.  
 Mansoul! Her mighty wars, they did portend  
 Her weal or woe and that world without end.  
 Wherefore she must be more concern'd than they  
 Whose fears begin and end the self-same day.'

'We all thought one battle would decide it,' says


Richard Baxter, writing about the Civil War. 'But we were all very much mistaken,' sardonically adds Carlyle. Yes; and you will be very much mistaken too if you enter on the war with sin in your soul, in your senses and in your members, with powder and shot for one engagement only. When you enlist here, lay well to heart that it is for life. There is no discharge in this war. There are no ornamental old pensioners here. It is a warfare for eternal life, and nothing will end it but the end of your evil days on earth.

## III

## EAR-GATE

‘Take heed what ye hear.’—*Our Lord in Mark.*

‘Take heed how you hear.’—*Our Lord in Luke.*

 HIS famous town of Mansoul had five gates, in at which to come, out at which to go, and these were made likewise answerable to the walls—to wit, impregnable, and such as could never be opened nor forced but by the will and leave of those within. ‘The names of the gates were these, Ear-gate, Eye-gate,’ and so on. Dr. George Wilson, who was once Professor of Technology in our University, took this suggestive passage out of the *Holy War* and made it the text of his famous lecture in the Philosophical Institution, and then he printed the passage on the fly-leaf of his delightful book *The Five Gateways of Knowledge*. That is a book to read sometime, but this evening is to be spent with the master.

For, after all, no one can write at once so beautifully, so quaintly, so suggestively, and so evangelically as John Bunyan. ‘The Lord Willbewill,’ says John Bunyan, ‘took special care that the gates should be secured with double guards, double bolts, and double locks and bars; and that Ear-gate especially might the better be looked to, for that was the gate in at which the King’s forces sought

most to enter. The Lord Willbewill therefore made old Mr. Prejudice, an angry and ill-conditioned fellow, captain of the ward at that gate, and put under his power sixty men, called Deaf-men; men advantageous for that service, forasmuch as they mattered no words of the captain nor of the soldiers. And first the King's officers made their force more formidable against Ear-gate: for they knew that unless they could penetrate that no good could be done upon the town. This done, they put the rest of their men in their places; after which they gave out the word, which was, Ye must be born again! And so the battle began. Now, they in the town had planted upon the tower over Ear-gate two great guns, the one called High-mind and the other Heady. Unto these two guns they trusted much; they were cast in the castle by Diabolus's ironfounder, whose name was Mr. Puff-up, and mischievous pieces they were. They in the camp also did stoutly, for they saw that unless they could open Ear-gate it would be in vain to batter the wall.' And so on, through many allegorical, and, if sometimes somewhat laboured, yet always eloquent, pungent, and heart-exposing pages.

With these for our text let us now take a rapid glance at what some of the more Bunyan-like passages in the prophets and the psalms say about the ear; how it is kept and how it is lost; how it is used and how it is abused.

1. The Psalmist uses a very striking expression in the 94th Psalm when he is calling for justice, and is teaching God's providence over men. 'He

that planted the ear,' the Psalmist exclaims, 'shall he not hear?' And, considering his church and his day, that is not a bad remark of Cardinal Bellarmine on that psalm,—'The Psalmist's word *planted*,' says that able churchman, 'implies design, in that the ear was not spontaneously evolved by an act of vital force, but was independently created by God for a certain object, just as a tree, not of indigenous growth, is of set purpose planted in some new place by the hand of man.' The same thing is said in Genesis, you remember, about the Garden of Eden,—the Lord planted it and put the man and the woman, whose ears he had just planted also, into the garden to dress it and keep it. How they dressed the garden and kept it, and how they held the gate of their ear against him who squatted down before it with his innuendoes and his lies, we all know to our as yet unrepaired, though not always irreparable, cost.

2. One would almost think that the scornful apostle had the Garden of Eden in his eye when he speaks so bitterly to Timothy of a class of people who are cursed with 'itching ears.' Eve's ears itched unappeasably for the devil's promised secret; and we have all inherited our first mother's miserable curiosity. How eager, how restless, how importunate, we all are to hear that new thing that does not at all concern us; or only concerns us to our loss and our shame. And the more forbidden that secret is to us, and the more full of inward evil to us—insane sinners that we are—the more determined we are to get at it. Let any forbidden secret be in the keeping of some one within earshot of us and we

will give him no rest till he has shared the evil thing with us. Let any specially evil page be published in a newspaper, and we will take good care that that day's paper is not thrown into the waste-basket; we will hide it away, like a dog with a stolen bone, till we are able to dig it up and chew it dry in secret. The devil has no need to blockade or besiege the gate of our ear if he has any of his good things to offer us. The gate that can only be opened from within will open at once of itself if he or any of his newsmongers but squat down for a moment before it. Shame on us, and on all of us, for our itching ears.

3. Isaiah speaks of some men in his day whose ears were 'heavy' and whose hearts were fat, and the Psalmist speaks of some men in his day whose ears were 'stopped' up altogether. And there is not a better thing in Bunyan at his very best than that surly old churl called Prejudice, so ill-conditioned and so always on the edge of anger. By the devil's plan of battle old Prejudice was appointed to be warder of Ear-gate, and to enable him to keep that gate for his master he had sixty deaf men put under him, men most advantageous for that post, forasmuch as it mattered not to them what Emmanuel and His officers said. There could be no manner of doubt who composed that inimitable passage. There is all the truth and all the humour and all the satire in Old Prejudice that our author has accustomed us to in his best pieces. The common people always get the best literature along with the best religion in John Bunyan. 'They are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her

ear, and which will not hearken to the voice of charmers charming never so wisely,' says the Psalmist, speaking about some bad men in his day. Now, I will not stand upon David's natural history here, but his moral and religious meaning is evident enough. David is not concerned about adders and their ears, he is wholly taken up with us and our adder-like animosity against the truth. Against what teacher, then ; against what preacher ; against what writer ; against what doctrine, reproof, correction, has your churlish prejudice adder-like shut your ear ? Against what truth, human or divine, have you hitherto stopped up your ear like the Psalmist's serpent ? To ask that boldly, honestly, and in the sight of God, at yourself to-night, would end in making you the lifelong friend of some preacher, some teacher, some soul-saving truth you have up till to-night been prejudiced against with the rooted prejudice and the sullen obstinacy of sixty deaf men. O God, help us to lay aside all this adder-like antipathy at men and things, both in public and in private life. Help us to give all men and all causes a fair field and no favour, but the field and the favour of an open and an honest mind, and a simple and a sincere heart. He that hath ears, let him hear !

4. As we work our way through the various developments and vicissitudes of the Holy War we shall find Ear-gate in it and in ourselves passing through many unexpected experiences ; now held by one side and now by another. And we find the same succession of vicissitudes set forth in Holy Scripture. If you pay any attention to what you

read and hear, and then begin to ask yourselves fair in the face as to your own prejudices, prepossessions, animosities, and antipathies,—you will at once begin to reap your reward in having put into your possession what the Scriptures so often call an ‘inclined’ ear. That is to say, an ear not only unstopped, not only unloaded, but actually prepared and predisposed to all manner of truth and goodness. Around our city there are the remains, the still visible tracks, of roads that at one time took the country people into our city, but which are now stopped up and made wholly impassable. There is no longer any road into Edinburgh that way. There are other roads still open, but they are very roundabout, and at best very up-hill. And then there are other roads so smooth, and level, and broad, and well kept, that they are full of all kinds of traffic; in the centre carts and carriages crowd them, on the one side horses and their riders delight to display themselves, and on the other side pedestrians and perambulators enjoy the sun. And then there are still other roads with such a sweet and gentle incline upon them that it is a positive pleasure both to man and beast to set their foot upon them. And so it is with the minds and the hearts of the men and the women who crowd these roads. Just as the various roads are, so are the ears and the understandings, the affections and the inclinations of those who walk and ride and drive upon them. Some of those men’s ears are impassably stopped up by self-love, self-interest, party-spirit, anger, envy, and ill-will,—impenetrably stopped up against all the men and all the truths of earth and of heaven

that would instruct, enlighten, convict or correct them. Some men's minds, again, are not so much shut up as they are crooked, and warped, and narrow, and full of obstruction and opposition. Whereas here and there, sometimes on horseback and sometimes on foot; sometimes a learned man walking out of the city to take the air, and sometimes an unlettered countryman coming into the city to make his market, will have his ear hospitably open to every good man he meets, to every good book he reads, to every good paper he buys at the street corner, and to every good speech, and report, and letter, and article he reads in it. And how happy that man is, how happy his house is at home, and how happy he makes all those he but smiles to on his afternoon walk, and in all his walk along the roads of this life. Never see an 'incline' on a railway or on a driving or a walking road without saying on it before you leave it, 'I waited patiently for the Lord, and He inclined His ear unto me and heard my cry. Because He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live. Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practise wicked works with them that work iniquity. Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness. I have inclined mine heart to perform Thy statutes alway, even unto the end.'

5. Shakespeare speaks in *Richard the Second* of 'the open ear of youth,' and it is a beautiful truth in a beautiful passage. Young men, who are still young men, keep your ears open to all truth and to all duty and to all goodness, and shut your ears


with an adder's determination against all that which ruined Richard—flattering sounds, reports of fashions, and lascivious metres. 'Our souls would only be gainers by the perfection of our bodies were they wisely dealt with,' says Professor Wilson in his *Five Gateways*. 'And for every human being we should aim at securing, so far as they can be attained, an eye as keen and piercing as that of the eagle; an ear as sensitive to the faintest sound as that of the hare; a nostril as far-scenting as that of the wild deer; a tongue as delicate as that of the butterfly; and a touch as acute as that of the spider. No man ever was so endowed, and no man ever will be; but all men come infinitely short of what they should achieve were they to make their senses what they might be made. The old have outlived their opportunity, and the diseased never had it; but the young, who have still an undimmed eye, an undulled ear, and a soft hand; an unblunted nostril, and a tongue which tastes with relish the plainest fare—the young can so cultivate their senses as to make the narrow ring, which for the old and the infirm encircles things sensible, widen for them into an almost limitless horizon.'

Take heed what you hear, and take heed how you hear.

## IV

## EYE-GATE

‘ Mine eye affecteth mine heart.’—*Jeremiah*.

HINK, in the first place,’ says the eloquent author of the *Five Gateways of Knowledge*, ‘how beautiful the human eye is. The eyes of many of the lower animals are, doubtless, very beautiful. You must all have admired the bold, fierce, bright eye of the eagle; the large, gentle, brown eye of the ox; the treacherous, green eye of the cat, waxing and waning like the moon; the pert eye of the sparrow; the sly eye of the fox; the peering little bead of black enamel in the mouse’s head; the gem-like eye that redeems the toad from ugliness, and the intelligent, affectionate expression which looks out of the human-like eye of the horse and dog. There are many other animals whose eyes are full of beauty, but there is a glory that excelleth in the eye of a man. We realise this best when we gaze into the eyes of those we love. It is their eyes we look at when we are near them, and it is their eyes we recall when we are far away from them. The face is all but a blank without the eye; the eye seems to concentrate every feature in itself. It is the eye that smiles, not the lips; it is the eye that

listens, not the ear; it is the eye that frowns, not the brow; it is the eye that mourns, not the voice. The eye sees what it brings the power to see. How true is this! The sailor on the look-out can see a ship where the landsman can see nothing. The Esquimaux can distinguish a white fox among the white snow. The astronomer can see a star in the sky where to others the blue expanse is unbroken. The shepherd can distinguish the face of every single sheep in his flock,' so Professor Wilson. And then Dr. Gould tells us in his mystico-evolutionary, Behmen-and-Darwin book, *The Meaning and the Method of Life*—a book which those will read who can and ought—that the eye is the most psychical, the most spiritual, the most useful, and the most valued and cherished of all the senses; after which he adds this wonderful and heart-affecting scientific fact, that in death by starvation, every particle of fat in the body is auto-digested except the cream-cushion of the eye-ball! So true is it that the eye is the mistress, the queen, and the most precious, to Creator and creature alike, of all the five senses.

Now, in the *Holy War* John Bunyan says a thing about the ear, as distinguished from the eye, that I cannot subscribe to in my own experience at any rate. In describing the terrible war that raged round Ear-gate, and finally swept up through that gate and into the streets of the city, he says that the ear is the shortest and the surest road to the heart. I confess I cannot think that to be the actual case. I am certain that it is not so in my own case. My eye is very much nearer my heart

than my ear is. My eye much sooner affects, and much more powerfully affects, my heart than my ear ever does. Not only is my eye by very much the shortest road to my heart, but, like all other short roads, it is cram-full of all kinds of traffic when my ear stands altogether empty. My eye is constantly crowded and choked with all kinds of commerce; whole hordes of immigrants and invaders trample one another down on the congested street that leads from my eye to my heart. Speaking for myself, for one assault that is made on my heart through my ear there are a thousand assaults successfully made through my eye. Indeed, were my eye but stopped up; had I but obedience and courage and self-mortification enough to pluck both my eyes out, that would be half the cleansing and healing and holiness of my evil heart; or at least, the half of its corruption, rebellion, and abominable wickedness would henceforth be hidden from me. I think I can see what led John Bunyan in his day and in this book to make that too strong statement about the ear as against the eye; but it is not like him to have let such an over-statement stand and continue in his corrected and carefully finished work. The prophet Jeremiah, I feel satisfied, would not have subscribed to what is said in the *Holy War* in extenuation of the eye. That heart-broken prophet does not say that it has been his ear that has made his head waters. It is his eye, he says, that has so affected his heart. The Prophet of the Captivity had all the *Holy War* potentially in his imagination when he penned that so suggestive sentence. And the Latin poet of experience, the

grown-up man's own poet, says somewhere that the things that enter by his eye seize and hold his heart much more swiftly and much more surely than those things that but enter by his ear. I shall continue, then, to hold by my text, ' Mine eye affecteth mine heart.'

1. Turning then, to the prophets and proverb-makers of Israel, and then to the New Testament for the true teaching on the eye, I come, in the first place, on that so pungent saying of Solomon that 'the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth.' Look at that born fool, says Solomon, who has his eyes and his heart committed to him to keep. See him how he gapes and stares after everything that does not concern him, and lets the door of his own heart stand open to every entering thief. London is a city of three million inhabitants, and they are mostly fools, Carlyle once said. And let him in this city whose eyes keep at home cast the first stone at those foreign fools. I will wager on their side that many of you here to-night know better what went on in Mashonaland last week than what went on in your own kitchen downstairs, or in your own nursery or schoolroom upstairs. Some of you are ten times more taken up with the prospects of Her Majesty's Government this session, and with the plots of Her Majesty's Opposition, than you are with the prospects of the good and the evil, and the plots of God and the devil, all this winter in your own hearts. You rise early, and make a fight to get the first of the newspaper; but when the minister comes in in the afternoon you blush because the housemaid has mislaid the Bible. Did you ever

read of the star-gazer who fell into an open well at the street corner? Like him, you may be a great astronomer, a great politician, a great theologian, a great defender of the faith even, and yet may be a stark fool just in keeping the doors and the windows of your own heart. 'You shall see a poor soul,' says Dr. Goodwin, 'mean in abilities of wit, or accomplishments of learning, who knows not how the world goes, nor upon what wheels its states turn, who yet knows more clearly and experimentally his own heart than all the learned men in the world know theirs. And though the other may better discourse philosophically of the acts of the soul, yet this poor man sees more into the corruption of it than they all.' And in another excellent place he says: 'Many who have leisure and parts to read much, instead of ballasting their hearts with divine truth, and building up their souls with its precious words, are much more versed in play-books, jeering pasquils, romances, and feigned staves, which are but apes and peacocks' feathers instead of pearls and precious stones. Foreign and foolish discourses please their eyes and their ears; they are more chameleons than men, for they live on the east wind.'

2. 'If thine eye offend thee'—our Lord lays down this law to all those who would enter into life—'pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell-fire.' Does your eye offend you, my brethren? Does your eye cause you to stumble and fall, as it is in the etymology? The right use of the eye is to keep

you from stumbling and falling ; but so perverted are the eye and the heart of every sinner that the city watchman has become a partaker with thieves, and our trusted guide and guardian a traitor and a knave. If thine eye, therefore, offends thee ; if it places a stone or a tree in thy way in a dark night ; if it digs a deep ditch right across thy way home ; if it in any way leads thee astray, or lets in upon thee thine enemies—then, surely, thou wert better to be without that eye altogether. Pluck it out, then ; or, what is still harder to go on all your days doing, pluck the evil thing out of it. Shut up that book and put it away. Throw that paper and that picture into the fire. Cut off that companion, even if he were an adoring lover. Refuse that entertainment and that amusement, though all the world were crowding up to it. And so on, and so on, till you have plucked your eye as clean of temptations and snares as it is possible to be in this life. For this life is full of that terrible but blessed law of our Lord. The life of all His people, that is ; and you are one of them, are you not ? You will know whether or no you are one of them just by the number of the beautiful things, and the sweet things, and the things to be desired, that you have plucked out of your eye at His advice and demand. True religion, my brethren, on some sides of it, and at some stages of it, is a terribly severe and sore business ; and unless it is proving a terribly severe and sore business to you, look out ! lest, with your two hands and your two feet and your two eyes, you be cast, with all that your hands and feet and eyes have feasted on, into the everlasting fires ! Woe unto the world because

of offences, but woe much more to that member and entrance-gate of the body by which the offence cometh ! Wherefore, if thine eye offend thee —— !

3. ‘Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.’ Now, if you wish both to preserve your eyes, and to escape the everlasting fires at the same time, attend to this text. For this is almost as good as plucking out your two eyes ; indeed, it is almost the very same thing. Solomon shall speak to the man in this house to-night who has the most inflammable, the most ungovernable, and the most desperately wicked heart. You, man, with that heart, you know that you cannot pass up the street without your eye becoming a perfect hell-gate of lust, of hate, of ill-will, of resentment and of revenge. Your eye falls on a man, on a woman, on a house, on a shop, on a school, on a church, on a carriage, on a cart, on an innocent child’s perambulator even ; and, devil let loose that you are, your eye fills your heart on the spot with absolute hell-fire. Your presence and your progress poison the very streets of the city. And that, not as the short-sighted and the vulgar will read Solomon’s plain-spoken Scripture, with the poison of lewdness and uncleanness, but with the still more malignant, stealthy, and deadly poison of social, professional, political, and ecclesiastical hatred, resentment, and ill-will. Whoredom and wine openly slay their thousands on all our streets ; but envy and spite, dislike and hatred their ten thousands. The fact is, we would never know how malignantly wicked our hearts are but for our eyes. But a sudden spark, a single flash through the eye

falling on the gunpowder that fills our hearts, that lets us know a hundred times every day what at heart we are made of. 'Of a verity, O Lord, I am made of sin, 'and that my life maketh manifest,' prays Bishop Andrewes every day. Why, sir, not to go to the street, the direction in which your eyes turn in this house this evening will make this house a very 'den,' as our Lord said—yes, a very den to you of temptation and transgression. My son, let thine eyes look right on. Ponder the path of thy feet, turn not to the right hand nor to the left—remove thy foot from all evil!

4. There is still another eye that is almost as good as an eye out altogether, and that is a Job's eye. Job was the first author of that eye and all we who have that excellent eye take it of him. 'I have made a covenant with mine eyes,' said that extraordinary man—that extraordinarily able, honest, exposed and exercised man. Now, you must all know what a covenant is. A covenant is a compact, a contract, an agreement, an engagement. In a covenant two parties come to terms with one another. The two covenanters strike hands, and solemnly engage themselves to one another: I will do this for you if you will do that for me. It is a bargain, says the other; let us have it sealed with wax and signed with pen and ink before two witnesses. As, for instance, at the Lord's Table. I swear, you say, over the Body and the Blood of the Son of God, I swear to make a covenant with mine eyes. I will never let them read again that idle, infidel, scoffing, unclean sheet. I will not let them look on any of my former images or imagina-

tions of forbidden pleasures. I swear, O Thou to whom the night shineth as the day, that I will never again say, Surely the darkness shall cover me! See if I do not henceforth by Thy grace keep my feet off every slippery street. That, and many other things like that, was the way that Job made his so noble covenant with his eyes in his day and in his land. And it was because he so made and so kept his covenant that God so boasted over him and said, Hast thou considered my servant Job? And then, every covenant has its two sides. The other side of Job's covenant, of which God Himself was the surety, you can read and think over in your solitary lodgings to-night. Read Job xxxi. 1, and then Job xl. to the end, and then be sure you take covenant paper and ink to God before you sleep. And let all fashionable young ladies hear what Miss Rossetti expects for herself, and for all of her sex with her who shall subscribe her covenant. 'True,' she admits, 'all our life long we shall be bound to refrain our soul, and keep it low; but what then? For the books we now refrain to read we shall one day be endowed with wisdom and knowledge. For the music we will not listen to we shall join in the song of the redeemed. For the pictures from which we turn we shall gaze unabashed on the Beatific Vision. For the companionship we shun we shall be welcomed into angelic society and the communion of triumphant saints. For the amusements we avoid we shall keep the supreme jubilee. For all the pleasures we miss we shall abide, and for evermore abide, in the rapture of heaven.'

5. And then there is the Pauline eye. An eye,

however, that Job would have shared with Paul and with the Corinthian Church had the patriarch been privileged to live in our New Testament day. Ever since the Holy Ghost with His anointing oil fell on us at Pentecost, says the apostle, we have had an eye by means of which we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen. Now, he who has an eye like that is above both plucking out his eyes or making a covenant with them either. It is like what Paul says about the law also. The law is not made for a righteous man. A righteous man is above the law and independent of it. The law does not reach to him and he is not hampered with it. And so it is with the man who has got Paul's splendid eyes for the unseen. He does not need to touch so much as one of his eyelashes to pluck them out. For his eyes are blind, and his ears are deaf, and his whole body is dead to the things that are temporal. His eyes are inwardly ablaze with the things that are eternal. He whose eyes have been opened to the truth and the love of his Bible, he will gloat no more over your books and your papers filled with lies, and slander, and spite, and lewdness! He who has his conversation in heaven does not need to set a watch on his lips lest he take up an ill report about his neighbour. He who walks every day on the streets of gold will step as swiftly as may be, with girt loins, and with a pre-occupied eye, out of the slippery and unsavoury streets of this forsaken earth. He who has fast working out for him an exceeding and eternal weight of glory will easily count all his cups and all his crosses, and all the crooks in his lot but as so many


light afflictions and but for a moment. My Lord Understanding had his palace built with high perspective towers on it, and the site of it was near to Eye-gate, from the top of which his lordship every day looked not at the things which are temporal, but at the things which are eternal, and down from his palace towers he every day descended to administer his heavenly office in the city.

Your eye, then, is the shortest way into your heart. Watch it well, therefore; suspect and challenge all outsiders who come near it. Keep the passes that lead to your heart with all diligence. Let nothing contraband, let nothing that even looks suspicious, ever enter your hearts; for, if it once enters, and turns out to be evil, you will never get it all out again as long as you live. ‘Death is come up into our windows,’ says our prophet in another place, ‘and is entered into our palaces, to cut off our children in our houses and our young men in our streets.’ Make a covenant, then, with your eyes. Take an oath of your eyes as to which way they are henceforth to look. For, let them look this way, and your heart is immediately full of lust, and hate, and envy, and ill-will. On the other hand, lead them to look that way and your heart is as immediately full of truth and beauty, brotherly kindness and charity. The light of the body is the eye; if, therefore, thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light; but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body is full of darkness. If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

## V

## THE KING'S PALACE

‘The palace is not for man, but for the Lord God.’—*David*.

OW, there is in this gallant country a fair and delicate town, a corporation, called Mansoul: a town for its building so curious, for its situation so commodious, for its privileges so advantageous, that I may say of it, there is not its equal under the whole heaven. Also, there was reared up in the midst of this town a most famous and stately palace: for strength, it might be called a castle; for pleasantness, a paradise; and for largeness, a place so copious as to contain all the world. This place the King intended for Himself alone, and not for another with Him, so great was His delight in it.’ Thus far, our excellent allegorical author. But there are other authors that treat of this great matter now in hand besides the allegorical authors. You will hear tell sometimes about a class of authors called the Mystics. Well, listen at this stage to one of them, and one of the best of them, on this present matter—the human heart, that is. ‘Our heart,’ he says, ‘is our manner of existence, or the state in which we feel ourselves to be; it is an inward life, a vital sensibility, which contains our manner of feeling what and how we are; it is the

state of our desires and tendencies, of inwardly seeing, tasting, relishing, and feeling that which passes within us; our heart is that to us inwardly with regard to ourselves which our senses of seeing, hearing, feeling, and such like are with regard to things that are without or external to us. Your heart is the best and greatest gift of God to you. It is the highest, greatest, strongest, and noblest power of your nature. It forms your whole life, be it what it will. All evil and all good come from your heart. Your heart alone has the key of life and death for you.' I was just about to ask you at this point which of our two authors, our allegorical or our mystical author upon the heart, you like best. But that would be a stupid and a wayward question since you have them both before you, and both at their best, to possess and to enjoy. To go back then to John Bunyan, and to his allegory of the human heart.

1. To begin with, then, there was reared up in the midst of this town of Mansoul a most famous and stately palace. And that palace and the town immediately around it were the mirror and the glory of all that its founder and maker had ever made. His palace was his very top-piece. It was the metropolitan of the whole world round about it; and it had positive commission and power to demand service and support of all around. Yes. And all that is literally, evidently, and actually true of the human heart. For all other earthly things are created and upheld, are ordered and administered, with an eye to the human heart. The human heart is the final cause, as our scholars would

say, of absolutely all other earthly things. Earth, air, water; light and heat; all the successively existing worlds, mineral, vegetable, animal, spiritual; grass, herbs, corn, fruit-trees, cattle and sheep, and all other living creatures; all are upheld for the use and the support of man. And, then, all that is in man himself is in him for the end and the use of his heart. All his bodily senses; all his bodily members; every fearfully and wonderfully made part of his body and of his mind; all administer to his heart. She is the sovereign and sits supreme. And she is worthy and is fully entitled so to sit. For there is nothing on the earth greater or better than the heart, unless it is the Creator Himself, who planned and executed the heart for Himself and not for another with Him. 'The body exists,' says a philosophical biologist of our day, 'to furnish the cerebral centres with prepared food, just as the vegetable world, viewed biologically, exists to furnish the animal world with similar food. The higher is the last formed, the most difficult, and the most complex; but it is just this that is most precious and significant—all of which shows His unrolling purpose. It is the last that alone explains all that went before, and it is the coming that will alone explain the present. God before all, through all, foreseeing all, and still preparing all; God in all is profoundly evident.' Yes, profoundly evident to profound minds, and experimentally and sweetly evident to religious minds, and to renewed and loving and holy hearts.

2. For fame and for state a palace, while for strength it might be called a castle. In sufficiently

ancient times the king's palace was always a castle also. David's palace on Mount Zion was as much a military fortress as a royal residence; and King Priam's palace was the protection both of itself and of the whole of the country around. In those wild times great men built their houses on high places, and then the weak and endangered people gathered around the strongholds of the powerful, as we see in our own city. Our own steep and towering rock invited to its top the castle-builder of a remote age, and then the exposed country around began to gather itself together under the shelter of the bourg. And thus it is that the military engineering of the *Holy War* makes that old allegorical book most excellent to read, not only for common men like you and me, who are bent on the fortification and the defence of our own hearts, but for the military historians of those old times also, for the experts of to-day also, and for all good students of fortification. And the New Testament of the Divine peace itself, as well as the Old Testament so full of the wars of the Lord—they both support and serve as an encouragement and an example to our spiritual author in the elaboration of his military allegory. Every good soldier of Jesus Christ has by heart the noble paradox of Paul to the Philippians—that the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Let God's peace, he says, be your man of war. Let His surpassing peace do both the work of war and the work of peace also in your hearts and in your minds. Let that peace both fortify with walls, and garrison with soldiers, and

watch every gate, and hold every street and lane of your hearts and of your minds all around your hearts. And all through the Prince of Peace, the Captain of all Holy War, Jesus Christ Himself. No wonder, then, that in a strength—in a kind and in a degree of strength—that passeth all understanding, this stately palace of the heart is also here called a well-garrisoned castle.

3. And then for pleasantness the human heart is a perfect paradise. For pleasantness the human heart is like those famous royal parks of Nineveh and Babylon that sprang up in after days as if to recover and restore the Garden of Eden that had been lost to those eastern lands. But even Adam's own paradise was but a poor outside imitation in earth and water, in flowers and fruits, of the far better paradise God had planted within him. Take another Mystic at this point upon paradise. 'My dear man,' exclaims Jacob Behmen, 'the Garden of Eden is not paradise, neither does Moses say so. Paradise is the divine joy, and that was in their own hearts so long as they stood in the love of God. Paradise is the divine and angelical joy, pure love, pure joy, pure gladness, in which there is no fear, no misery, and no death. Which paradise neither death nor the devil can touch. And yet it has no stone wall around it; only a great gulf which no man or angel can cross but by that new birth of which Christ spoke to Nicodemus. Reason asks, Where is paradise to be found? Is it far off or near? Is it in this world or is it above the stars? Where is that desirable native country where there is no death? Beloved, there is nothing nearer you

at this moment than paradise, if you incline that way. God beckons you back into paradise at this moment, and calls you by name to come. Come, He says, and be one of My paradise children. In paradise,' the Teutonic Philosopher goes on, 'there is nothing but hearty love, a meek and a gentle love; a most friendly and most courteous discourse: a gracious, amiable, and blessed society, where the one is always glad to see the other, and to honour the other. They know of no malice in paradise, no cunning, no subtlety, and no sly deceit. But the fruits of the Spirit of God are common among them in paradise, and one may make use of all the good things of paradise without causing disfavour, or hatred, or envy, for there is no contrary affection there, but all hearts there are knit together in love. In paradise they love one another, and rejoice in the beauty, loveliness, and gladness of one another. No one esteems or accounts himself more excellent than another in paradise; but every one has great joy in another, and rejoices in another's fair beauty, whence their love to one another continually increases, so that they lead one another by the hand, and so friendly kiss one another.' Thus the blessed Behmen saw paradise and had it in his heart as he sat over his hammer and lapstone in his solitary stall. For of such as Jacob Behmen and John Bunyan is the kingdom of heaven, and all such saintly souls have paradise restored again and improved upon in their own hearts.

4. And for largeness a place so copious as to contain all the world. Over against the word 'copious' Bunyan hangs for a key, Ecclesiastes

third and eleventh; and under it Miss Peacock adds this as a note — ‘*Copious*, spacious. Old French, *copieux*; Latin, *copiosus*, plentiful.’ The human heart, as we have already read to-night, is the highest, greatest, strongest, and noblest part of human nature. And so it is. Fearfully and wonderfully made as is the whole of human nature, that fear and that wonder surpass themselves in the spaciousness and the copiousness of the human heart. For what is it that the human heart has not space for, and to spare? After the whole world is received home into a human heart, there is room, and, indeed, hunger, for another world, and after that for still another. The sun is — I forget how many times bigger than our whole world, and yet we can open our heart and take down the sun into it, and shut him out again and restore him to his immeasurable distances in the heavens, and all in the twinkling of an eye. As for instance. As I wrote these lines I read a report of a lecture by Sir Robert Ball in which that distinguished astronomer discoursed on recent solar discoveries. A globe of coal, Sir Robert said, as big as our earth, and all set ablaze at the same moment, would not give out so much heat to the worlds around as the sun gives out in a thousandth part of a second. Well, as I read that, and ere ever I was aware what was going on, my heart had opened over my newspaper, and the sun had swept down from the sky, and had rushed into my heart, and before I knew where I was the cry had escaped my lips, ‘Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty! Who shall not fear

Thee and glorify thy name?’ And then this reflection as suddenly came to me: How good it is to be at peace with God, and to be able and willing to say, My Father! That the whole of the surging and flaming sun was actually down in my straitened and hampered heart at that idle moment over my paper is scientifically demonstrable; for only that which is in the heart of a man can kindle the passions that are in the heart of that man; and nothing is more sure to me than that the great passions of fear and love, wonder and rapture were at that moment at a burning point within me. There is a passage well on in the *Holy War*, which for terror and for horror, and at the same time for truth and for power, equals anything either in Dante or in Milton. Lucifer has stood up at the council board to second the scheme of Beelzebub. ‘Yes,’ he said, amid the plaudits of his fellow-princes—‘Yes, I swear it. Let us fill Mansoul full with our abundance. Let us make of this castle, as they vainly call it, a warehouse, as the name is in some of their cities above. For if we can only get Mansoul to fill herself full with much goods she is henceforth ours. My peers,’ he said, ‘you all know His parable of how unblessed riches choke the word; and, again, we know what happens when the hearts of men are overcharged with surfeiting and with drunkenness. Let us give them all that, then, to their heart’s desire.’ This advice of Lucifer, our history tells us, was highly applauded in hell, and ever since it has proved their masterpiece to choke Mansoul with the fulness of this world, and to surfeit the heart with the good

things thereof. But, my brethren, you will outwit hell herself and all her counsellors and all her machinations, if, out of all the riches, pleasures, cares, and possessions, that both heaven and earth and hell can heap into your heart, those riches, pleasures, cares, and possessions but produce corresponding passions and affections towards God and man. Only let fear, and love, and thankfulness, and helpfulness be kindled and fed to all their fulness in your heart, and all the world and all that it contains will only leave the more room in your boundless heart for God and for your brother. All that God has made, or could make with all His counsel and all His power laid out, will not fill your boundless and bottomless heart. He must come down and come into your boundless and bottomless heart Himself. Himself: your Father, your Redeemer, and your Sanctifier and Comforter also. Let the whole universe try to fill your heart, O man of God, and after it all we shall hear you singing in famine and in loneliness the doleful ditty:

‘O come to my heart, Lord Jesus,  
There is room in my heart for Thee.

5. ‘Madame,’ said a holy solitary to Madame Guyon in her misery — ‘Madame, you are disappointed and perplexed because you seek without what you have within. Accustom yourself to seek for God in your own heart and you will always find Him there.’ From that hour that gifted woman was a Mystic. The secret of the interior life flashed upon her in a moment. She had been starving in the midst of fulness; God was near and not far off;

the kingdom of heaven was within her. The love of God from that hour took possession of her soul with an inexpressible happiness. Prayer, which had before been so difficult, was now delightful and indispensable; hours passed away like moments: she could scarcely cease from praying. Her domestic trials seemed great to her no longer; her inward joy consumed like a fire the reluctance, the murmur, and the sorrow, which all had their birth in herself. A spirit of comforting peace, a sense of rejoicing possession, pervaded all her days. God was continually with her, and she seemed continually yielded up to God. ‘Madame,’ said the solitary, ‘you seek without for what you have within.’ Where do you seek for God when you pray, my brethren? To what place do you direct your eyes? Is it to the roof of your closet? Is it to the east end of your consecrated chapel? Is it to that wooden table in the east end of your chapel? Or, passing out of all houses made with hands and consecrated with holy oil, do you lift up your eyes to the skies where the sun and the moon and the stars dwell alone? ‘What a folly!’ exclaims Theophilus, in the golden dialogue, ‘for no way is the true way to God but by the way of our own heart. God is nowhere else to be found. And the heart itself cannot find Him but by its own love of Him, faith in Him, dependence upon Him, resignation to Him, and expectation of all from Him.’ ‘You have quite carried your point with me,’ answered Theogenes after he had heard all that Theophilus had to say. ‘The God of meekness, of patience, and of love is henceforth the one God


of my heart. It is now the one bent and desire of my soul to seek for all my salvation in and through the merits and mediation of the meek, humble, patient, resigned, suffering Lamb of God, who alone has power to bring forth the blessed birth of those heavenly virtues in my soul. What a comfort it is to think that this Lamb of God, Son of the Father, Light of the World; this Glory of heaven and this Joy of angels is as near to us, is as truly in the midst of us, as He is in the midst of heaven. And that not a thought, look, or desire of our heart that presses toward Him, longing to catch one small spark of His heavenly nature, but is as sure a way of finding Him, as the woman's way was who was healed of her deadly disease by longing to touch but the border of His garment.'

To sum up. 'There is reared up in the midst of Mansoul a most famous and stately palace: for strength, it may be called a castle; for pleasantness, a paradise; and for largeness, a place so copious as to contain all the world. This palace the King intends but for Himself alone, and not another with Him, and He commits the keeping of that palace day and night to the men of the town.'

## VI

## MY LORD WILLBEWILL

—‘to will is present with me.’—*Paul*.

 HERE is a large and a learned literature on the subject of the will. There is a philosophical and a theological, and there is a religious and an experimental literature on the will.

Jonathan Edwards's well-known work stands out conspicuously at the head of the philosophical and theological literature on the will, while our own Thomas Boston's *Fourfold State* is a very able and impressive treatise on the more practical and experimental side of the same subject. The Westminster Confession of Faith devotes one of its very best chapters to the teaching of the word of God on the will of man, and the Shorter Catechism touches on the same subject in Effectual Calling. Outstanding philosophical and theological schools have been formed around the will, and both able and learned and earnest men have taken opposite sides on the subject of the will under the party names of Necessitarians and Libertarians. This is not the time, nor am I the man, to discuss such abstruse subjects; but those students who wish to master this great matter of the will, so far as it can be mastered in books, are recommended to begin with

Dr. William Cunningham's works, and then to go on from them to a treatise that will reward all their talent and all their enterprise, Jonathan Edwards's perfect masterpiece.

1. But, to come to my Lord Willbewill, one of the gentry of the famous town of Mansoul :—well, this Lord Willbewill was as high-born as any man in Mansoul, and was as much a freeholder as any of them were, if not more. Besides, if I remember my tale aright, he had some privileges peculiar to himself in that famous town. Now, together with these, he was a man of great strength, resolution, and courage; nor in his occasion could any turn him away. But whether he was too proud of his high estate, privileges, and strength, or what (but sure it was through pride of something), he scorns now to be a slave in Mansoul, as his own proud word is, so that now, next to Diabolus himself, who but my Lord Willbewill in all that town? Nor could anything now be done but at his beck and good pleasure throughout that town. Indeed, it will not out of my thoughts what a desperate fellow this Willbewill was when full power was put into his hand. All which—how this apostate prince lost power and got it again, and lost it and got it again—the interested and curious reader will find set forth with great fulness and clearness in many powerful pages of the *Holy War*.

John Bunyan was as hard put to it to get the right name for this head of the gentry of Mansoul as Paul was to get the right name for sin in the seventh of the Romans. In that profoundest and intensest of all his profound and intense passages,

the apostle has occasion to seek about for some expression, some epithet, some adjective, as we say, to apply to sin so as to help him to bring out to his Roman readers something of the malignity, deadliness, and unspeakable evil of sin as he had sin living and working in himself. But all the resources of the Greek language, that most resourceful of languages, utterly failed Paul for his pressing purpose. And thus it is that, as if in scorn of the feebleness and futility of that boasted tongue, he tramples its grammars and its dictionaries under his feet, and makes new and unheard-of words and combinations of words on the spot for himself and for his subject. He heaps up a hyperbole the like of which no orator or rhetorician of Greece or Rome had ever needed or had ever imagined before. He takes sin, and he makes a name for sin out of itself. The only way to describe sin, he feels, the only way to characterise sin, the only way to aggravate sin, is just to call it sin; sinful sin; 'sin by the commandment became exceeding sinful.' And, in like manner, John Bunyan, who has only his own mother tongue to work with, in his straits to get a proper name for this terrible fellow who was next to Diabolus himself, cannot find a proud enough name for him but just by giving him his own name, and then doubling it. Add will to will, multiply will by will, and multiply it again, and after you have done all you are no nearer to a proper name for that apostate, who, for pride, and insolence, and headstrongness, in one word, for wilfulness, is next to Diabolus himself. But as Willbewill, if he is to be named and described at all, is best named and

described by his own naked name ; so Bunyan is always best illustrated out of his own works. And I turn accordingly to the *Heavenly Footman* for an excellent illustration of the wilfulness of the will both in a good man and in a bad ; as, thus : ‘ Your self-willed people, nobody knows what to do with them. We use to say, He will have his own will, do all we can. If a man be willing, then any argument shall be matter of encouragement ; but if unwilling, then any argument shall give discouragement. The saints of old, they being willing and resolved for heaven, what could stop them ? Could fire and fagot, sword or halter, dungeons, whips, bears, bulls, lions, cruel rackings, stonings, starvings, nakedness ? So willing had they been made in the day of His power. And see, on the other side, the children of the devil, because they are not willing, how many shifts and starting-holes they will have ! I have married a wife ; I have a farm ; I shall offend my landlord ; I shall lose my trade ; I shall be mocked and scoffed at, and therefore I cannot come. But, alas ! the thing is, they are not willing. For, were they once soundly willing, these, and a thousand things such as these, would hold them no faster than the cords held Samson when he broke them like flax. I tell you the will is all. The Lord give thee a will, then, and courage of heart.’

2. Let that, then, suffice for this man’s name and nature, and let us look at him now when his name and his nature have both become evil ; that is to say, when Willbewill has become Illwill. You can imagine ; no, you cannot imagine unless you already

know, how evil, and how set upon evil, Illwill was. His whole mind, we are told, now stood bending itself to evil. Nay, so set was he now upon sheer evil that he would act it of his own accord, and without any instigation at all from Diabolus. And that went on till he was looked on in the city as next in wickedness to very Diabolus himself. Parable apart, my ill-willed brethren, our ill-will has made us very fiends in human shape. What a fall, what a fate, what a curse it is to be possessed of a devil of ill-will! Who can put proper words on it after Paul had to confess himself silent before it? Who can utter the diabolical nature, the depth and the secrecy, the subtlety and the spirituality, the range and the reach-out of an ill-will? Our hearts are full of ill-will at those we meet and shake hands with every day. At men also we have never seen, and who are totally ignorant even of our existence. Over a thousand miles we dart our viperous hearts at innocent men. At great statesmen we have ill-will, and at small; at great churchmen and at small; at great authors and at small; at great, and famous, and successful men in all lines of life; for it is enough for ill-will that another man be praised, and well-paid, and prosperous, and then placed in our eye. No amount of suffering will satiate ill-will; the very grave has no seal against it. And, now and then, you have it thrust upon you that other men have the same devil in them as deeply and as actively as he is in you. You will suddenly run across a man on the street. His face was shining with some praise he had just had spoken to him, or with some recogni-

tion he had just received from some great one ; or with some good news for himself he had just heard, before he caught sight of you. But the light suddenly dies on his face, and darkness comes up out of his heart at his sudden glimpse of you. What is the matter ? you ask yourself as he scowls past you. What have you done so to darken any man's heart to you ? And as you stumble on in the sickening cloud he has left behind him, you suddenly recollect that you were once compelled to vote against that man on a public question : on some question of home franchise, or foreign war, or church government, or city business ; or perchance, a family has left his shop to do business in yours, or his church to worship God in yours, or such like. It will be a certain relief to you to recollect such things. But with it all there will be a shame and a humiliation and a deep inward pain that will escape into a cry of prayer for him and for yourself and for all such sinners on the same street. If you do not find an escape from your sharp resentment in ejaculatory prayer and in a heart-cleansing great good-will, your heart, before you are a hundred steps on, will be as black with ill-will as his is. But that must not again be. Would you hate or strike back at a blind man who stumbled and fell against you on the street ? Would you retaliate at a maniac who gnashed his teeth and shook his fist at you on his way past you to the madhouse ? Or at a corpse being carried past you that had been too long without burial ? And shall you retaliate on a miserable man driven mad with diabolical passion ? Or at a poor sinner whose

heart is as rotten as the grave? Ill-will is abroad in our learned and religious city at all hours of the day and night. He glares at us under the sun by day, and under the street lamps at night. We suddenly feel his baleful eye on us as we thoughtlessly pass under his overlooking windows: it will be a side street and an unfrequented, where you will not be ashamed and shocked and pained at heart to meet him. Public men; much purchased and much praised men; rich and prosperous men; men high in talent and in place; and, indeed, all manner of men,—walk abroad in this life softly. Keep out of sight. Take the side streets, and return home quickly. You have no idea what an offence and what a snare you are to men you know, and to men you do not know. If you are a public man, and if your name is much in men's mouths, then the place you hold, the prices and the praises you get, do not give you one-tenth of the pleasure that they give a thousand other men pain. Men you never heard of, and who would not know you if they met you, gnaw their hearts at the mere mention of your name. Desire, then, to be unknown, as À Kempis says. O teach me to love to be concealed, prays Jeremy Taylor. Be ambitious to be unknown, Archbishop Leighton also instructs us. And the great Fénelon took *Ama nesciri* for his crest and for his motto. No wonder that an apostle cried out under the agony and the shame of ill-will. No wonder that to kill it in the hearts of men the Son of God died under it on the cross. And no wonder that all the gates of hell are wide open, day and night, for there is no day there, to receive

home all those who will entertain ill-will in their hearts, and all the gates of heaven shut close to keep all ill-will for ever out.

3. But, bad enough as all that is, the half has not been told, and never will be told in this life. Butler has a passage that has long stumbled me, and it stumbles me the more the longer I live and study him and observe myself. ‘Resentment,’ he says, in a very deep and a very serious passage—‘Resentment being out of the case, there is not, properly speaking, any such thing as direct ill-will in one man towards another.’ Well, great and undisputed as Butler’s authority is in all these matters, at the same time he would be the first to admit and to assert that a man’s inward experience transcends all outward authority. Well, I am filled with shame and pain and repentance and remorse to have to say it, but my experience carries me right in the teeth of Butler’s doctrine. I have dutifully tried to look at Butler’s inviting and exonerating doctrine in all possible lights, and from all possible points of view, in the anxious wish to prove it true; but I dare not say that I have succeeded. The truth for thee—my heart would continually call to me—the best truth for thee is in me, and not in any Butler! And when looking as closely as I can at my own heart in the matter of ill-will, what do I find—and what will you find? You will find that after subtracting all that can in any proper sense come under the head of real resentment, and in cases where real resentment is out of the question; in cases where you have received no injury, no neglect, no contempt, no anything whatsoever of that kind, you will find that

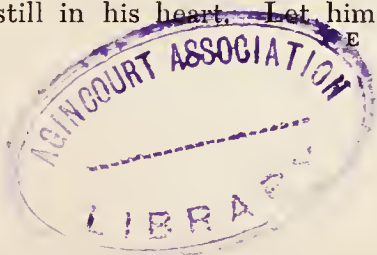
there are men innocent of all that to you, yet men to whom you entertain feelings, animosities, antipathies, that can be called by no other name than that of ill-will. Look within and see. Watch within and see. And I am sure you will come to subscribe with me to the humbling and heart-breaking truth, that, even where there is no resentment, and no other explanation, excuse, or palliation of that kind, yet that festering, secret, malignant ill-will is working in the bottom of your heart. If you doubt that, if you deny that, if all that kind of self-observation and self-sentencing is new to you, then observe yourself, say, for one week, and report at the end of it whether or no you have had feelings and thoughts and wishes in your secret heart toward men who never in any way hurt you, which can only be truthfully described as pure ill-will; that is to say, you have not felt and thought and wished toward them as you would have them, and all men, feel and think and wish toward you.

4. 'To will is present with me, but how to perform I find not,' says the apostle; and again, 'Ye cannot do the things that ye would.' Or, as Dante has it,

' The power which wills  
Bears not supreme control ; laughter and tears  
Follow so closely on the passion prompts them,  
They wait not for the motion of the will  
In natures most sincere.'

Now, just here lies a deep distinction that has not been enough taken account of by our popular, or even by our more profound, spiritual writers. The will is often regenerate and right; the will often bends, as Bunyan has it, to that which is good; but

behind the will and beneath the will the heart is still full of passions, affections, inclinations, dispositions that are evil; instinctively, impulsively, involuntarily evil, even 'in natures most sincere.' And hence arises a conflict, a combat, a death-grip, an agony, a hell on earth, that every regenerate and advancing soul of man is full of. His will is right. If his will is wrong; if he chooses evil; then there is no mystery in the matter so far as he is concerned. He is a bad man, and he is so intentionally and deliberately and of set purpose; and it is a rule in divine truth that 'wilfulness in sinning is the measure of our sinfulness.' But his will is right. To will is present with him. He is every day like Thomas Boston one Sabbath-day: 'Though I cannot be free of sin, God Himself knows that He would be welcome to make havoc of my sins and to make me holy. I know no lust that I would not be content to part with to-night. My will, bound hand and foot, I desire to lay at His feet.' Now, is it not as clear as noonday that in the case of such a man as Boston his mind is one thing and his heart another? Is it not plain that he has both a good-will and an ill-will within him? A will that immediately and resolutely chooses for God, and for truth, and for righteousness, and for love; and another law in his members warring against that law of his mind? 'Before conversion,' says Thomas Shepard, 'the main wound of a man is in his will. And then, after conversion, though his will is changed, yet, *ex infirmitate*, there are many things that he cannot do, so strong is the remnant of malignity that is still in his heart. Let him get



Christ to help him here.' In all that ye see your calling, my brethren.

5. 'Now, if I do that I would not,' adds the apostle, extricating himself and giving himself fair-play and his simple due among all his misery and self-accusation—'Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.' Or, again, as William Law has it: 'All our natural evil ceases to be our own evil as soon as our will turns away from it. Our natural evil then changes its nature and loses all its poison and death, and becomes an holy cross on which we die to self and this life and enter the kingdom of heaven.' My dear brethren, tell me, is your sin your cross? Is your sinfulness your cross? Is the evil that is ever present with you your holy cross? For, every other cross beside sin is a cross of straw, a cross of feathers, a paste-board and a painted cross, and not a real and genuine cross at all. The wood and the nails and the spear all taken together were not our Lord's real cross. His real cross was sin; our sin laid on His hands, and on His heart, and on His imagination, and on His conscience, till it was all but His very own sin. Our sin was so fearfully and wonderfully laid upon Christ that He was as good as a sinner Himself under it. So much so that all the nails and all the spears, all the thirst and all the darkness that His body and His soul could hold were as nothing beside the sin that was laid upon Him. And so it is with us; with as many of us as are His true disciples. Our sin is our cross; not our actual transgressions, any more than His; but our inward sinfulness. And not the sinfulness of our will; that is no real cross

to any man ; but the sinfulness of our hearts against our will, and beneath our will, and behind our will. And this is such a cross that if Christ had something in His cross that we have not, then we have something in ours that He had not. He made many sad and sore Psalms His own ; but even if He had lived on earth to read the seventh of the Romans, He could not have made it His own. His true people are beyond Him here. The disciple is above his Master here. The Master had His own cross, and it was a sufficient cross ; but we can challenge Him to come down and look and say if He ever saw a cross like our cross. He was made a curse. He was hanged on the tree. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree. But his people are beyond Him in the real agony and crucifixion of sin. For He never in Gethsemane or on Calvary either cried as Paul once cried, and as you and I cry every day—To will is present with me ! But the good that I would I do not ! And, oh ! the body of this death !

6. Now, if any total stranger to all that shall ask me : What good there is in all that ? and, Why I so labour in such a world of unaccustomed and unpleasant things as that ? I have many answers to his censure. For example, and first, I labour and will continue to labour more and more in this world of things, and less and less in any other world, because here we begin to see things as they are—the deepest things of God and of man, that is. Also, because I have the precept, and the example, and the experience of God's greatest and best saints before me here. Because, also, our full and true salvation

begins here, goes on here, and ends here. Because, also, teaching these things and learning these things will infallibly make us the humblest of men, the most contrite, the most self-despising, the most prayerful, and the most patient, meek, and loving of men. And, students, I labour in this because this is science; because this is the first in order and the most fruitful of all the sciences, if not the noblest and the most glorious of all the sciences. There is all that good for us in this subject of the will and the heart, and whole world's of good lie away out beyond this subject that eye hath not seen nor ear heard.

## VII

## SELF-LOVE

'This know, that men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, unthankful, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, traitors, heady, high-minded: from all such turn away.'—*Paul*.



RAY, sir, said Academicus, tell me more plainly just what this self of ours actually is. Self, replied Theophilus, is hell, it is the devil, it is darkness, pain, and disquiet.

It is the one and only enemy of Christ. It is the great antichrist. It is the scarlet whore, it is the fiery dragon, it is the old serpent that is mentioned in the Revelation of St John. You rather terrify me than instruct me by this description, said Academicus. It is indeed a very frightful matter, returned Theophilus; for it contains everything that man has to dread and to hate, to resist and to avoid. Yet be assured, my friend, that, careless and merry as this world is, every man that is born into this world has all those enemies to overcome within himself; and every man, till he is in the way of regeneration, is more or less governed by those enemies. No hell in any remote place, no devil that is separate from you, no darkness or pain that is not within you, no antichrist either at Rome or in England, no furious

beast, no fiery dragon, without you or apart from you, can do you any real hurt. It is your own hell, your own devil, your own beast, your own antichrist, your own dragon that lives in your own heart's blood that alone can hurt you. Die to this self, to this inward nature, and then all outward enemies are overcome. Live to this self, and then, when this life is out, all that is within you, and all that is without you, will be nothing else but a mere seeing and feeling this hell, serpent, beast, and fiery dragon. But, said Theogenes, a third party who stood by, I would, if I could, more perfectly understand the precise nature of self, or what it is that makes it to be so full of evil and misery. To whom Theophilus turned and replied: Covetousness, envy, pride, and wrath are the four elements of self. And hence it is that the whole life of self can be nothing else but a plague and torment of covetousness, envy, pride, and wrath, all of which is precisely sinful nature, self, or hell. Whilst man lives, indeed, among the vanities of time, his covetousness, his envy, his pride, and his wrath, may be in a tolerable state, and may help him to a mixture of peace and trouble; they may have their gratifications as well as their torments. But when death has put an end to the vanity of all earthly cheats, the soul that is not born again of the supernatural Word and Spirit of God must find itself unavoidably devoured by itself, shut up in its own insatiable, unchangeable, self-tormenting covetousness, envy, pride, and wrath. O Theogenes! that I had power from God to take those dreadful scales off men's eyes that hinder

them from seeing and feeling the infinite importance of this most certain truth! God give a blessing, Theophilus, to your good prayer. And then let me tell you that you have quite satisfied my question about the nature of self. I shall never forget it, nor can I ever possibly after this have any doubt about the truth of it.'

1. 'All my theology,' said an old friend of mine to me not long ago—'all my theology is out of Thomas Goodwin to the Ephesians.' Well, I find Thomas Goodwin saying in that great book that self is the very quintessence of original sin; and, again, he says, study self-love for a thousand years and it is the top and the bottom of original sin; self is the sin that dwelleth in us and that doth most easily beset us. Now, that is just what Academicus and Theophilus and Theogenes have been saying to us in their own powerful way in their incomparable dialogue. All sin and all misery; all covetousness, envy, pride, and wrath,—trace it all back to its roots, travel it all up to its source, and, as sure as you do that, self and self-love are that source, that root, and that black bottom. I do not forget that Butler has said in some stately pages of his that self-love is morally good; that self-love is coincident with the principle of virtue and part of the idea; and that it is a proper motive for man. But the deep bishop, in saying all that, is away back at the creation-scheme and Eden-state of human nature. He has not as yet come down to human nature in its present state of overthrow, dismemberment, and self-destruction. But when he does condescend

and comes close to the mind and the heart of man as they now are in all men, even Butler becomes as outspoken, and as eloquent, and as full of passion and pathos as if he were an evangelical Puritan. Self-love, Butler startles his sober-minded reader as he bursts out—self-love rends and distorts the mind of man! Now, you are a man. Well, then, do you feel and confess that rending and distorting to have taken place in you? Butler is a philosopher, and Goodwin is a preacher, but you are more: you are a man. You are the owner of a human heart, and you can say whether or no it is a rent and a distorted heart. Is your mind warped and wrenched by self-love, and is your heart rent and torn by the same wicked hands? Do you really feel that it needs nothing more to take you back again to paradise but that your heart be delivered from self-love? Do you now understand that the foundations of heaven itself must be laid in a heart healed and cleansed and delivered from self-love? If you do, then your knowledge of your own heart has set you abreast of the greatest of philosophers and theologians and preachers. Nay, before multitudes of men who are called such. It is my meditation all the day, you say. I have more understanding now than all my teachers; for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients; because now I keep Thy precepts.

2. 'Self-love has made us all malicious,' says John Calvin. We are Calvinists, were we to call any man master. But we are to call no man master, and least of all in the matters of the heart.

Every man must be his own philosopher, his own moralist, and his own theologian in the matters of the heart. He who has a heart in his bosom and an eye in his head can need no Calvin, no Butler, no Goodwin, and no Law to tell him what goes on in his own heart. And, on the other hand, his own heart will soon tell him whether or no Calvin, and Butler, and Goodwin, and Law know anything about those matters on which some men would set them up as our masters. Well, come away all of you who own a human heart. Come and say whether or no your heart, and the self-love of which it is full, have made you a malicious man. I do not ask if you are always and to everybody full of maliciousness. No; I know quite well that you are sometimes as sweet as honey and as soft as butter. For, has not even Theophilus said that whilst a man still lives among the vanities of time, his covetousness, his envy, his pride, and his wrath may be in a tolerable state, and may help him to a mixture of peace and trouble; these vices may have their gratifications as well as their torments. No; I do not trifle with you and with this serious matter so as to ask if you are full of malice at all times and to all men. No. For, let a man be fortunate enough to be on your side; let him pass over to your party; let him become profitable to you; let him be clever enough and mean enough to praise and to flatter you up to the top of your appetite for praise and flattery, and, no doubt, you will love that man. Or, if that is not exactly love, at least it is no longer hate. But let that man unfortunately be led to

leave your party; let him cease being profitable to you; let him weary of flattering you with his praise; let him forget you, neglect you, despise you, and go against you, and then look at your own heart. Do you care now to know what malice is? Well, that is malice that distorts and rends your heart as often as you meet that man on the street or even pass by his door. That is malice that dances in your eyes when you see his name in print. That is malice with which you always break out when his name is mentioned in conversation. That is malice that heats your heart when you suddenly recollect him in the multitude of your thoughts within you. And you are in good company all the time. 'We, ourselves,' says Paul to Titus, 'we also at one time lived in malice and in envy. We were hateful and we hated one another.' 'Hateful,' Goodwin goes on in his great book, 'every man is to another man more or less; he is hated of another and he hateth another more or less; and if his nature were let out to the full, there is that in him, "every man is against every man," as is said of Ishmael. *Homo homini lupus*,' adds our brave preacher. And Abbé Grou speaks out with the same challenge from the opposite church pole, and says: 'Yes; self-love makes us touchy, ready to take offence, ill-tempered, suspicious, severe, exacting, easily offended; it keeps alive in our hearts a certain malignity, a secret joy at the mortifications which befall our neighbour; it nourishes our readiness to criticise, our dislike at certain persons, our ill-feeling, our bitterness, and a thousand other things prejudicial to charity.'

3. 'Myself is my own worst enemy,' says Abbé

Grou. That is to say, we may have enemies who hate us more than we hate ourselves, and enemies who would hurt us, if they could, as much as we hurt ourselves ; but the Abbé's point is that they cannot. And he is right. No man has ever hurt me as I have hurt myself. There are men who hate me so much that they would poison my life of all its peace and happiness if they could. But they cannot. They cannot ; but let them not be cast down on that account, for there is one who can do, and who will do as long as he lives, what they cannot do. A man's foes, to be called foes, are in his own house : they are in his own heart. Let our enemies attend to their own peace and happiness, and our self-love will do all, and more than all, that they would fain do. At the most, they and their ill-will can only give occasion to our self-love ; but it is our self-love that seizes upon the occasion, and through it rends and distorts our own hearts. And were our hearts only pure of self-love, were our hearts only clothed with meekness and humility, we could laugh at all the ill-will of our enemies as leviathan laughs at the shaking of a spear. ' Know thou,' says À Kempis to his son, ' that the love of thyself doth do thee more hurt than anything in the whole world.' Yes ; but we shall never know that by merely reading *The Imitation*. We must read ourselves. We must study, as we study nothing else, our own rent and distorted hearts. Our own hearts must be our daily discovery. We must watch the wounds our hearts take every day ; and we must give all our powers of mind to tracing all our wounds back to their true causes. We must say : ' that sore blow came on my

mind and on my heart from such and such a quarter, from such and such a hand, from such and such a weapon ; but this pain, this rankling, poisoned, and ever-festering wound, this sleepless, gnawing, cancerous sore, comes from the covetousness, the pride, the envy, and the wrath of my own heart.' When we begin to say that, we shall then begin to understand and to love Thomas ; we shall sit daily at his feet and shall be numbered among his sons.

4. And this suffering at our own hands goes on till at last the tables are completely turned against self-love, and till what was once to us the dearest thing in the whole world becomes, as Pascal says, the most hateful. We begin life by hating the men, and the things, who hurt us. We hate the men who oppose us and hinder us ; the men who speak, and write, and act, and go in any way against us. We bitterly hate all who humble us, despise us, trample upon us, and in any way ill-use us. But afterwards, when we have become men, men in experience of this life, and, especially, of ourselves in this life ; after we gain some real insight and attain to some real skill in the life of the heart, we come round to forgive those we once hated. We have come now to see why they did it. We see now exactly how much they hurt us after all, and how little. And, especially, we have come to see,—what at one time we could not have believed,—that all our hurt, to be called hurt, has come to us from ourselves. And thus that great revolution of mind and that great revulsion of feeling and of passion has taken place, after which we are left with no one henceforth to hate, to be called hating, but

ourselves. We may still continue to avoid our enemies, and we may do that too long and too much ; we may continue to fear them and be on the watch against them far too much ; but to deliberately hate them is henceforth impossible. All our hatred,—all our deliberate, steady, rooted, active hatred,—is now at ourselves ; at ourselves, that is, so far and so long as we remain under the malignant and hateful dominion of self-love. When Butler gets our self-love restored to reasonableness, and made coincident with virtue and part of the idea ; when our self-love becomes uniformly coincident with the principle of obedience to God's commands, then we shall love ourselves as our neighbour, and our neighbour as ourselves, and both in God. But, till then, there is nothing and no one on earth or in hell so hateful to us as ourselves and our own hateful hearts. 'And if in that we are treading the winepress alone as far as our fellow-men are concerned, all the more we have Him with us in all our agony who wept over the heart of man because He knew what was in it, and what must always come out of it. Evil thoughts, He said, and fornications, and murders, and thefts, and covetousness, and wickedness, and deceit, and an evil eye, and pride, and folly, and what not. And Paul has the mind of Christ with him in the text. I do not need to repeat again the hateful words. Now, what do you say ? was 'Pascal beyond the truth, was he deeper than the truth or more deadly than the truth when he said with a stab that self is hateful ? I think not.

5. 'Oh that I were free, then, of myself,' wrote Samuel Rutherford from Aberdeen in 1637 to John

Ferguson of Ochiltree. ‘What need we all have to be ransomed and redeemed from that master-tyrant, that cruel and lawless lord, ourself! Even when I am most out of myself, and am best serving Christ, I have a squint eye on myself.’ And to the Laird of Cally in the same year and from the same place: ‘Myself is the master idol we all bow down to. Every man blameth the devil for his sins, but the house devil of every man that eateth with him and lieth in his bosom is himself. Oh blessed are they who can deny themselves!’ And to the Irish ministers the year after: ‘Except men martyr and slay the body of sin in sanctified self-denial, they shall never be Christ’s. Oh, if I could but be master of myself, my own mind, my own will, my own credit, my own love, how blessed were I! But, alas! I shall die only minting and aiming at being a Christian.’

VIII

OLD MR. PREJUDICE, THE KEEPER OF  
EAR-GATE, WITH HIS SIXTY DEAF  
MEN UNDER HIM

'Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?'—*Naaman*.

'Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?'—*Nathanael*.

'... observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing by partiality.'—*Paul*.



OLD Mr. Prejudice was well known in the wars of Mansoul as an angry, unhappy, and ill-conditioned old churl. Old Mr. Prejudice was placed by Diabolus, his master, as keeper of the ward at the post of Ear-gate, and for that fatal service he had sixty completely deaf men put under him as his company. Men eminently advantageous for that fatal service. Eminently advantageous,—inasmuch as it mattered not one atom to them what was spoken in their ear either by God or by man.

1. Now, to begin with, this churlish old man had already earned for himself a very evil name. For what name could well be more full of evil memories and of evil omens than just this name of Prejudice? Just consider what prejudice is. Prejudice, when we stop over it and take it to pieces and look well at it,—prejudice is so bad and so abominable that

you would not believe it could be so bad till you had looked at it and at how it acts in your own case. For prejudice gives judgment on your case and gives orders for your execution before your defence has been heard, before your witnesses have been called, before your summons has been served, ay, and even before your indictment has been drawn out. What a scandal and what an uproar a malfeasance of justice like that would cause if it were to take place in any of our courts of law ! Only, the thing is impossible ; you cannot even imagine it. We shall have Magna Charta up before us in the course of these lectures. Well, ever since Magna Charta was extorted from King John, such a scandal as I have supposed has been impossible either in England or in Scotland. And that such cases should still be possible in Russia and in Turkey places those two old despotisms outside the pale of the civilised world. And yet, loudly as we all denounce the Czar and the Sultan, eloquently as we boast over Magna Charta, Habeas Corpus, and what not, every day you and I are doing what would cost an English king his crown, and an English judge his head. We all do it every day, and it never enters one mind out of a hundred that we are trampling down truth, and righteousness, and fairplay, and brotherly love. We do not know what a diabolical wickedness we are perpetrating every day. The best men among us are guilty of that iniquity every day, and they never confess it to themselves ; no one ever accuses them of it ; and they go down to death and judgment unsuspecting of the discovery that they will soon make there. You would not steal a stick

or a straw that belonged to me ; but you steal from me every day what all your gold and mine can never redeem ; you murder me every day in my best and my noblest life. You me, and I you.

2. Old Mr. Prejudice. Now, there is a golden passage in Jonathan Edwards's *Diary* that all old men should lay well to heart and conscience. 'I observe,' Edwards enters, 'that old men seldom have any advantage of new discoveries, because these discoveries are beside a way of thinking they have been long used to. Resolved, therefore, that, if ever I live to years, I will be impartial to hear the reasons of all pretended discoveries, and receive them, if rational, how long soever I have been used to another way of thinking. I am too dogmatical ; I have too much of egotism ; my disposition is always to be telling of my dislike and my scorn.' What a fine, fresh, fruitful, progressive, and peaceful world we should soon have if all our old and all our fast-ageing men would enter that extract into their diary ! How the young would then love and honour and lean upon the old ; and how all the fathers would always abide young and full of youthful life like their children ! Then the righteous should flourish like the palm-tree ; he should grow like a cedar in Lebanon. They that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age ; they shall be fat and flourishing. What a free scope would then be given to all God's unfolding providences, and what a warm welcome to all His advancing truths ! What sore and spreading wounds would then be salved, what

health and what vigour would fill all the body political, as well as all the body mystical! May the Lord turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest the earth be smitten with a curse!

3. Mr. Prejudice was an old man; and this also has been handed down about him, that he was almost always angry. And if you keep your eyes open you will soon see how true to the life that feature of old Mr. Prejudice still is. In every conversation, discussion, debate, correspondence, the angry man is invariably the prejudiced man; and, according to the age and the depth, the rootedness and the intensity of his prejudices, so is the ferocity and the savagery of his anger. He has already settled this case that you are irritating and wronging him so much by your still insisting on bringing up. It is a reproach to his understanding for you to think that there is anything to be said in that matter that he has not long ago heard said and fully answered. Has he not denounced that bad man and that bad cause for years? You insult me, sir, by again opening up that matter in my presence. He will have none of you or of your arguments either. You are as bad yourself as that bad man is whose advocate you are. We all know men whose hearts are full of coals of juniper, burning coals of hate and rage, just by reason of their ferocious prejudices. Hate is too feeble a word for their gnashing rage against this man and that cause, this movement and that institution. There is an absolutely murderous light in their eye as they work themselves up against the men and the things they

hate. Charity rejoices not in iniquity; but you will see otherwise Christian and charitable men so jockeyed by the devil that they actually rejoice in iniquity and do not know what they are doing, or who it is that is egging them on to do it. You will see otherwise and at other times good men so full of the rage and madness of prejudice and partiality that they will storm at every report of goodness and truth and prosperity in the man, or in the cause, or in the church, or in the party, they are so demented against. Jockey is not the word. There is the last triumph of pure devilry in the way that the prince of the devils turns old Prejudice's very best things—his love of his fathers, his love of the past, his love of order, his love of loyalty, his love of the old paths, and his very truest and best religion itself—into so much fat fuel for the fires of hate and rage that are consuming his proud heart to red-hot ashes. If the light that is in us be darkness, how great is that darkness; and if the life that is in us be death, how deadly is that death!

4. Old, angry, and ill-conditioned. Ill-conditioned is an old-fashioned word almost gone out of date. But, all the same, it is a very expressive, and to us to-night a quite indispensable word. An ill-conditioned man is a man of an in-bred, cherished, and confirmed ill-nature. His heart, which was a sufficiently bad heart to begin with, is now so exercised in evil and so accustomed to evil, that,—how can he be born again when he is so old and so ill-natured? All the qualities, all the passions, all the emotions of his heart are out of joint; their

bent is bad; they run out naturally to mischief. Now, what could possibly be more ill-conditioned than to judge and sentence, denounce and execute a man before you have heard his case? What could be more ill-conditioned than positively to be afraid lest you should be led to forgive, and redress, and love, and act with another man? To be determined not to hear one word that you can help in his defence, in his favour, and in his praise? Could a human heart be in a worse state on this side hell itself than that? Nay, that is hell itself in your evil heart already. Let prejudice and partiality have their full scope among the wicked passions of your ill-conditioned heart, and lo! the kingdom of darkness is already within you. Not, lo, here! or, lo, there! but within you. Look to yourselves, says John to us all, full as we all are of our own ill-conditions. Look to yourselves. But we have no eyes left with which to see ourselves; we look so much at the faults and the blames of our neighbour. ‘Publius goes to church sometimes, and reads the Scriptures; but he knows not what he reads or prays, his head is so full of politics. He is so angry at kings and ministers of state that he has no time nor disposition to call himself to account. He has the history of all parliaments, elections, prosecutions, and impeachments by heart, and he dies with little or no religion, through a constant fear of Popery.’ Poor, old, ill-conditioned Publius!

5. And, then, his sixty deaf men under old, angry, ill-conditioned Prejudice. We read of engines of sixty-horse power. And here is a man with the

power of resisting and shutting out the truth equal to that of sixty men like himself. We all know such men ; we would as soon think of speaking to those iron pillars about a change of mind as we would to them. If you preach to their prejudices and their prepossessions and their partialities, they are all ears to hear you, and all tongues to trumpet your praise. But do not expect them to sit still with ordinary decency under what they are so prejudiced against ; do not expect them to read a book or buy a passing paper on the other side. Sixty deaf men hold their ears ; sixty ill-conditioned men hold their hearts. Habit with them is all the test of truth ; it must be right, they've done it from their youth. And thus they go on to the end of their term of life, full of their own fixed ideas, with their eyes full of beams and jaundices and darkness and death. Some people think that we take up too much of our time with newspapers in our day, and that, if things go on as they are going, we shall soon have neither time nor taste for anything else but half a dozen papers a day. But all that depends on the conditions with which we read. If we would read as Jonathan Edwards read the weekly news-letters of his day ; if we read all our papers to see if the kingdom of God was coming in reply to our prayer ; if we read, observing all things, like Timothy, without prejudice or partiality, then I know no better reading for an ill-conditioned heart begun to look to itself than just a good, out-and-out party newspaper. And if it is a church paper all the better for your purpose. If you read with your fingers in your ears ; if you read with a beam in your eye, you had better confine

yourself in your reading ; if you feel that your prejudices are inflamed and your partiality is intensified, then take care what paper you take in. But if you read all you read for the love of the truth, for justice, for fair-play, and for brotherly love, and all that in yourself ; if you read all the time with your eyes on your own ill-conditioned heart, then, as James says, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations. Take up your political and ecclesiastical paper every morning, saying to yourself, Go to, O my heart, and get thy daily lesson. Go to, and enter thy cleansing and refining furnace. Go to, and come well out of thy daily temptation.—A nobler school you will not find anywhere for a prejudiced, partial, angry, and ill-conditioned heart than just the party journals of the day. For the abating of prejudice ; for seeing the odiousness of partiality, and for putting on every day a fair, open, catholic, Christian mind, commend me to the public life and the public journals of our living day. And it is not that this man may be up and that man down ; this cause victorious and that cause defeated ; this truth vindicated and that untruth defeated, that public life rolls on and that its revolutions are reported to us. Our own minds and our own hearts are the final cause, the ultimate drift, and the far-off end and aim of it all. We are not made for party and for the partialities and prosperities of party ; party and all its passions and all its successes and all its defeats are made, and are permitted to be made for us ; for our opportunity of purging ourselves free of all our ill-conditions, of all our prejudices, of all our partialities, and of all

the sin and misery that come to us of all these things.

6. 'It is the work of a philosopher,' says Addison in one of his best *Spectators*, 'to be every day subduing his passions and laying aside his prejudices.' We are not philosophers, but we shall be enrolled in the foremost ranks of philosophy if we imitate such philosophers in their daily work, as we must do and shall do. Well, are we begun to do it? Are we engaged in that work of theirs and ours every day? Is God our witness and our judge that we are? Are we so engaged upon that inward work, and so succeeding in it, that we can read our most prejudiced newspaper with the same mind and spirit, with the same profit and progress, with which we read our Bible? A good man, a humble man, a man acutely sensible of his ill-conditions, will look on every day as lost or won according as he has lost or won in this inward war. If his partialities are dropping off his mind; if his prejudices are melting; if he can read books and papers with pleasure and instruction that once filled him with dark passions and angry outbursts; if his Calvinism lets him read Thomas à Kempis and Jeremy Taylor and William Law; if his High-Churchism lets him delight to worship God in an Independent or a Presbyterian church; if his Free-Churchism permits him to see the Establishment reviving, and his State-Churchism admits that the Free Churches have more to say to him than he had at one time thought; if his Toryism lets him take in a Radical paper, and his Radicalism a Unionist paper—then let him thank God, for God is in all that though he knew it not. And when he

counts up his incalculable benefits at each return of the Lord's table, let him count up as not the least of them an open mind and a well-conditioned heart, an unprejudiced mind, and an impartial heart.

7. And now, to conclude: Take old, angry, ill-conditioned Prejudice, his daily prayer: 'My Adorable God and Creator! Thy Holy Church is by the wickedness of men divided into various communions, all hating, condemning, and endeavouring to destroy one another. I made none of these divisions, nor am I any longer a defender of them. I wish everything removed out of every communion that hinders the Common Unity. The wranglings and disputings of whole churches and nations have so confounded all things that I have no ability to make a true and just judgment of the matters between them. If I knew that any one of these communions was alone acceptable to Thee, I would do or suffer anything to make myself a member of it. For, my Good God, I desire nothing so much as to know and to love Thee, and to worship Thee in the most acceptable manner. And as I humbly presume that Thou wouldst not suffer Thy Church to be thus universally divided, if no divided portion could offer any worship acceptable unto Thee; and as I have no knowledge of what is absolutely best in these divided parts, nor any ability to put an end to them; so I fully trust in Thy goodness, that Thou wilt not suffer these divisions to separate me from Thy mercy in Christ Jesus; and that, if there be any better ways of serving Thee than those I already enjoy, Thou

wilt, according to Thine infinite mercy, lead me into them, O God of my peace and my love.' After this manner old, angry, ill-conditioned Prejudice prayed every day till he died, a little child, in charity with all men, and in acceptance with Almighty God.

## IX

## CAPTAIN ANYTHING

‘I am made all things to all men. . . . I please all men in all things.’—*Paul*.



APTAIN ANYTHING came originally from the ancient town of Fair-speech. Fair-speech had many royal bounties and many special privileges bestowed upon it, and Captain Anything and his family had come to many titles and to great riches in that ancient, loyal, and honourable borough. My Lord Turn-about, my Lord Time-server, my Lord Fair-speech (from whose ancestors that town first took its name), as also such well-known commoners as Mr. Smooth-man, Mr. Facing-both-ways, and Mr. Two-tongues were all sprung with Captain Anything from the same ancient and long-established ancestry. As to his religion, from a child young Anything had sat under the parson of the parish, the same Reverend Two-tongues as has been mentioned above. And our budding soldier followed the example of his minister in that he never strove too long against wind or tide, or was ever to be seen on the same side of the street with Religion when she was banished from court or had lost her silver slippers. The crest of the Anythings was a delicately poised weather-cock; and the motto engraved around the gyrating bird ran thus: ‘Our

judgment always jumps according to the occasion.' As a military man, Captain Anything is described in military books as a proper man, and a man of courage and skill—to appearance. He and his company under him were a sort of Swiss guard in Mansoul. They held themselves open and ready for any master. They lived not so much by religion or by loyalty as by the fates of worldly fortune. In his secret despatches Diabolus was wont to address Captain Anything as My Darling; and be sure you recruit your Switzers well, Diabolus would say; but when the real stress of the war came, even Diabolus cast Captain Anything off. And thus it came about that when both sides were against this despised creature he had to throw down his arms and flee into a safe skulking place for his life.

1. In that half-papist, half-atheistic country called France there is a class of politicians known by the name of Opportunists. They are a kind of public men that, we are thankful to say, are not known in Protestant and Evangelical England, but they may be pictured out and described to you in this homely way: An Opportunist stands well out of the sparks of the fire, and well in behind the stone wall, till the fanatics for liberty, equality, and fraternity have snatched the chestnuts out of the fire, and then the Opportunist steps out from his safe place and blandly divides the well-roasted tidbits among his family and his friends. As long as there is any jeopardy, the Jacobins are denounced and held up to opprobrium; but when the jeopardy and the risk are well past, the sober-minded,

cautious, conservative, and responsible statesmen walk off with the portfolios of place and privilege and pay under their honest arms. But these are the unprincipled papists and infidels of a mushroom republic ; and, thank God, such spurious patriotism, and such sham and selfish statesmanship, have not yet shown their miserable heads among faithful, fearless, straightforward, and uncalculating Englishmen. At the same time, if ever that continental vice should attack our national character, we have two well-known essays in our ethical and casuistical literature that may with perfect safety be pitted against anything that either France or Italy has produced. Even if they are but a master's irony, let all ambitious men keep *Of Cunning* and *Of Wisdom for a Man's Self* under their pillow. Let all young men who would toady a great man ; let all young ministers who would tune their pulpit to king, or court, or society ; let all tradesmen and merchants who prefer their profits to their principles—if they have literature enough, let them soak their honest minds in our great Chancellor's sage counsels ; and he who promoted Anything and dubbed him his Darling, he will, no doubt, publish both a post and a title on his birthday for you also.

2. 'What religion is he of?' asks Dean Swift. 'He is an Anythingarian,' is the answer, 'for he makes his self-interest the sole standard of his life and doctrine.' And Archbishop Leighton, a very different churchman from the bitter author of the *Polite Conversations*, is equally contemptuous toward the self-seeker in divine things. 'Your boasted peaceableness often proceeds from a super-

ficial temper; and, not seldom, from a supercilious disdain of whatever has no marketable use or value, and from your utter indifference to true religion. Toleration is an herb of spontaneous growth in the soil of indifference. Much of our union of minds proceeds from want of knowledge and from want of affection to religion. Many who boast of their church conformity, and that no one hears of their noise, may thank the ignorance of their minds for that kind of quietness.' But by far the most powerful assault that ever was made upon lukewarmness in religion and upon self-seeking in the Church was delivered by Dante in the tremendous third canto of his *Inferno* :—

Various tongues,  
Horrible languages, outcries of woe,  
Accents of anger, voices deep and hoarse,  
With hands together smote that swelled the sounds,  
Made up a tumult that for ever whirls  
Round through that air with solid darkness stain'd,  
Like to the sand that in the whirlwind flies.  
I then, with error yet encompass'd, cried,  
'O master! What is this I hear? What race  
Are these, who seem so overcome with woe?'  
He then to me: 'This miserable fate  
Suffer the wretched souls of those who lived  
Without or praise or blame, with that ill band  
Of angels mixed, who nor rebellious proved,  
Nor yet were true to God, but for themselves  
Were only. Mercy and Justice scorn them both.  
Speak not of them, but look and pass them by.'  
Forthwith, I understood for certain this the tribe  
Of those ill spirits both to God displeasing  
And to His foes. Those wretches who ne'er lived,  
Went on in nakedness, and sorely stung  
By wasps and hornets, which bedewed their cheeks  
With blood, that mix'd with tears dropp'd to their feet,  
And by disgustful worms was gathered there.

3. Now, we must all lay it continually and with uttermost humiliation to heart that we all have Captain Anything's opportunism, his self-interest, his insincerity, his instability, and his secret deceitfulness in ourselves. That man knows little of himself who does not despise and hate himself for his secret self-seeking even in the service of God. For, how the love of praise will seduce and corrupt this man, and the love of gain that man ! How easy it is to flatter and adulate this man out of all his former opinions and his deepest principles, and how an expected advantage will make that other man forget now an old alliance and now a deep antipathy ! How often the side we take even in the most momentous matters is decided by the most unworthy motives and the most contemptible considerations ! Unstable as water, Reuben shall not excel. Double-minded men, we, like Jacob's first-born, are unstable in all our ways. We have no anchor, or, what anchor we sometimes have soon slips. We have no fixed pole-star by which to steer our life. Any will-o'-the-wisp of pleasure, or advantage, or praise will run us on the rocks. The searchers of Mansoul, after long search, at last lighted on Anything, and soon made an end of him. Seek him out in your own soul also. Be you sure he is somewhere there. He is skulking somewhere there. And, having found him, if you cannot on the spot make an end of him, keep your eye on him, and never say that you are safe from him and his company as long as you are in this soul-deceiving life. And, that Anything will not be let enter the gates of the city you are set on seeking, that will go largely to make

that sweet and clean and truthful city your very heaven to you.

4. 'I am made all things to all men, and I please all men in all things.' One would almost think that was Captain Anything himself, in a frank, cynical, and self-censorious moment. But if you will look it up you will see that it was a very different man. The words are the words of Anything, but the heart behind the words is the heart of Paul. And this, again, teaches us that we should be like the Messiah in this also, not to judge after the sight of our eyes, nor to reprove after the hearing of our ears. Miserable Anything ! outcast alike of heaven and hell ! But, O noble and blessed Apostle ! the man, says Thomas Goodwin, who shall be found seated next to Jesus Christ Himself in the kingdom of God. Happy Paul : happy even on this earth, since he could say, and in the measure he could say with truth and with sincerity, such self-revelations as these : 'Unto the Jews I am become as a Jew that I might gain the Jews ; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law. To them that are without law, as without law, that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak ; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. Giving none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God. Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.' Noble words, and inspiring to read. Yes : but look within, and think

what Paul must have passed through ; think what he must have been put through before he,—a man of like selfish passions as we are, a man of like selfish passions as Anything was,—could say all that. Let his crosses and his thorns ; his raptures up to the third heaven, and his body of death that he bore about with him all his days ; let his magnificent spiritual gifts, and his still more magnificent spiritual graces tell how they all worked together to make the chief of sinners out of the blameless Pharisee, and, at the same time, Christ's own chosen vessel and the apostle of all the churches. Boasting about his patron apostle, St. Augustine says : ' Far be it from so great an apostle, a vessel elect of God, an organ of the Holy Ghost, to be one man when he preached and another when he wrote ; one man in private and another in public. He was made all things to all men, not by the craft of a deceiver, but from the affection of a sympathiser, succouring the diverse diseases of souls with the diverse emotions of compassion ; to the little ones dispensing the lesser doctrines, not false ones, but the higher mysteries to the perfect—all of them, however, true, harmonious, and divine.' The exquisite irony of Socrates comes into my mind in this connection, and will not be kept out of my mind. By instinct as well as by art Socrates mixed up the profoundest seriousness with the humorous affectation of qualities of mind and even of character the exact opposite of what all who loved him knew to be the real Socrates. ' Intellectually,' says Dr. Thomson, ' the acutest man of his age, Socrates represents himself in all companies as the dullest person present. Morally the

purest, he affects to be the slave of passion and borrows the language even of the lewd to describe a love and a goodwill far too exalted for the comprehension of his contemporaries. This irony of his disarmed ridicule by anticipating it; it allayed jealousy and propitiated envy; and it possibly procured him admission into gay circles from which a more solemn teacher would have been excluded. But all the time it had for its basis a real greatness of soul, a hearty and an unaffected disregard of public opinion, a perfect disinterestedness, and an entire abnegation of self. He made himself a fool in order that fools by his folly might be made wise; he humbled himself to the level of those among whom his work lay that he might raise some few among them to his own level: he was all things to all men, if by any means he might save some. Till Alcibiades ends the splendid eloge that Plato puts into his mouth with these words, "All my master's vice and stupidity and worship of wealthy and great men is counterfeit. It is all but the Silenus-mask which conceals the features of the god within; for if you remove the covering, how shall I describe to you, my friends and boon companions, the excellence of the beauty you will find within! Whether any of you have seen Socrates in his serious mood, when he has thrown aside the mask and disclosed the divine features beneath it, is more than I know. But I have seen them, and I can tell you that they seemed to me glorious and marvellous, and, truly, godlike in their beauty."'

Well, now, I gather out of all that this great lesson: that it is, to begin with, a mere matter of

temperament, or what William Law would call a mere matter of complexion and sensibility, whether, to begin with, a man is hard, and dry, and narrow, and stiff, and proud, and scornful, and cruel; or again, whether he is soft and tender, broad and open, and full of sympathy and of the milk of human kindness. At first, and to begin with, there is neither praise nor blame as yet in the matter. A man is hard just as a stone is hard; it is his nature. Or he is soft as clay is soft; it is again his nature. But, inheriting such a nature, and his inherited nature beginning to appear, then is the time when the true man really begins to be made. The bad man dwells in contentment, and, indeed, by preference, at home in his own hard, proud, scornful, resentful heart; or, again, in his facile, fawning, tide-waiting, time-serving heart; and thus he chooses, accepts, and prefers his evil fate, and never seeks the help either of God or man to enable him to rise above it. Paul was not, when we meet him first, the sweet, humble, affable, placable, makeable man that he made himself and came to be after a lifetime of gospel-preaching and of adorning the gospel he preached. And all the assistances and all the opportunities that came to Paul are still coming to you and to me; till, whether naturally pliable and affectionate or the opposite, we at last shall come to the temperament, the complexion, and the exquisite sensibility of Paul himself. Are you, then, a hard, stiff, severe, censorious, proud, angry, scornful man? Or are you a too-easy, too-facile man-pleaser and self-seeker, being all things to all men that you may make use of all


men? Are you? Then say so. Confess it to be so. Admit that you have found yourself out. And reflect every day what you have got to do in life. Consider what a new birth you need and must have. Number your days that are left you in which to make you a new heart, and a new nature, and a new character. Consider well how you are to set about that divine work. You have a minister, and your minister is called a divine because by courtesy he is supposed to understand that divine work, and to be engaged on it night and day in himself, and in season and out of season among his people. He will tell you how you are to make you a new heart. Or, if he does not and cannot do that; if he preaches about everything but that to a people who will listen to anything but that, then your soul is not in his hands but in your own. You may not be able to choose your minister, but you can choose what books you are to buy, or borrow, and read. And if there is not a minister within a hundred miles of you who knows his right hand from his left, then there are surely some booksellers who will advise you about the classical books of the soul till you can order them for yourselves. And thus, if it is your curse and your shame to be as spongy, and soapy, and oily, and slippery as Anything himself; if you choose your church and your reading with any originality, sense, and insight, you need not fear but that you will be let live till you die an honest, upright, honourable, fearless gentleman: no timid friend to unfashionable truth, as you are to-night, but a man like Thomas Boston's Ettrick elder, who lies waiting the last trump under a

gravestone engraven with this legend : Here lies a man who had a brow for every good cause. Only, if you would have that written and read on your headstone, you have no time to lose. If I were you I would not sit another Sabbath under a minister whose preaching was not changing my nature, making my heart new, and transforming my character ; no, not though the Queen herself sat in the same loft. And I would leave the church even of my fathers, and become anything as far as churches go, if I could get a minister who held my face close and ever closer up to my own heart. Nor would I spend a shilling or an hour that I could help on any impertinent book,—any book that did not powerfully help me in the one remaining interest of my one remaining life : a new nature and a new heart. No, not I. No, not I any more.

## X

## CLIP-PROMISE

' . . . the promise made of none effect.'—*Paul*.

OWARD the end of the thirteenth century Edward the First, the English Justinian, brought a select colony of artists from Italy to England and gave them a commission to execute their best coinage for the English Mint. Deft and skilful as those artists were, the work they turned out was but rude and clumsy compared with some of the gold and silver and copper coins of our day. The Florentine artists took a sheet of gold or of silver and divided the sheet up with great scissors, and then they hammered the cut-out pieces as only a Florentine hammerman could hammer them. But, working with such tools, and working on such methods, those goldsmiths and silversmiths, with all their art, found it impossible to give an absolutely equal weight and worth to every piece of money that they turned out. For one thing, their cut and hammered coins had no carved rims round their edges as all our gold and silver and even copper coinage now has. And, accordingly, the clever rogues of that day soon discovered that it was far easier for them to take up a pair of shears and to clip a sliver of silver off the rough rim of a shilling,

or a shaving of gold off a sovereign, than it was to take off their coats and work a hard day's work. Till to clip the coin of the realm soon became one of the easiest and most profitable kinds of crime. In the time of Elizabeth a great improvement was made in the way of coining the public money ; but it was soon found that this had only made matters worse. For now, side by side with a pure and unimpaired and full-valued currency, and mingled up everywhere with it, there was the old, clipped, debased, and far too light gold and silver money ; till troubles arose in connection with the coinage and circulation of the country that can only be told by Macaulay's extraordinarily graphic pen. 'It may well be doubted,' Macaulay says, in the twenty-first chapter of his *History of England*, 'whether all the misery which has been inflicted on the English nation in a quarter of a century by bad Kings, bad Ministers, bad Parliaments, and bad Judges was equal to the misery caused in a single year by bad crowns and bad shillings. Whether Whigs or Tories, Protestants or Papists were uppermost, the grazier drove his beasts to market, the grocer weighed out his currants, the draper measured out his broadcloth, the hum of buyers and sellers was as loud as ever in the towns ; the cream overflowed the pails of Cheshire ; the apple juice foamed in the presses of Herefordshire ; the piles of crockery glowed in the furnaces of the Trent, and the barrows of coal rolled fast along the timber railways of the Tyne. But when the great instrument of exchange became thoroughly deranged all trade and all industry were smitten as with a palsy.

Nothing could be purchased without a dispute. Over every counter there was wrangling from morning to night. The employer and his workmen had a quarrel as regularly as Saturday night came round. On a fair day or a market day the clamours, the disputes, the reproaches, the taunts, the curses, were incessant. No merchant would contract to deliver goods without making some stipulation about the quality of the coin in which he was to be paid. The price of the necessities of life, of shoes, of ale, of oatmeal, rose fast. The bit of metal called a shilling the labourer found would not go so far as sixpence. One day Tonson sends forty brass shillings to Dryden, to say nothing of clipped money. The great poet sends them all back and demands in their place good guineas. "I expect," he says, "good silver, not such as I had formerly." Meanwhile, at every session of the Old Bailey the most terrible example of coiners and clippers was made. Hurdles, with four, five, six wretches convicted of counterfeiting or mutilating the money of the realm, were dragged month after month up Holborn Hill.' But I cannot copy the whole chapter, wonderful as the writing is. Suffice it to say that before the clippers could be rooted out, and confidence restored between buyer and seller, the greatest statesmen, the greatest financiers, and the greatest philosophers were all at their wits' end. Kings' speeches, cabinet councils, bills of Parliament, and showers of pamphlets were all full in those days of the clipper and the coiner. All John Locke's great intellect came short of grappling successfully with the terrible crisis the clipper of

the coin had brought upon England. Carry all that, then, over into the life of personal religion, after the manner of our Lord's parables, and after the manner of the *Pilgrim's Progress* and the *Holy War*, and you will see what an able and impressive use John Bunyan will make of the shears of the coin-clippers of his day. Macaulay has but made us ready to open and understand Bunyan. 'After this, my Lord apprehended Clip-Promise. Now, because he was a notorious villain, for by his doings much of the king's coin was abused, therefore he was made a public example. He was arraigned and judged to be set first in the pillory, then to be whipped by all the children and servants in Mansoul, and then to be hanged till he was dead. Some may wonder at the severity of this man's punishment, but those that are honest traders in Mansoul they are sensible of the great abuse that one clipper of promises in little time may do in the town of Mansoul; and, truly, my judgment is that all those of his name and life should be served out even as he.'

The grace of God is like a bullion mass of purest gold, and then Jesus Christ is the great ingot of that gold, and then Moses, and David, and Isaiah, and Hosea, and Paul, and Peter, and John are the inspired artists who have commission to take both bullion and ingot, and out of them to cut, and beat, and smelt, and shape, and stamp, and superscribe the promises, and then to issue the promises to pass current in the market of salvation like so many shekels, and pounds, and pence, and farthings, and mites, as the ease may be. And it was just these

royal coins, imaged and superscribed so richly and so beautifully, that Clip-Promise so mutilated, abused, and debased, till for doing so he was hanged by the neck till he was dead.

1. The very house of Israel herself, the very Mint-house, Tower Hill, and Lombard Street of Israel herself, was full of false coiners and clippers of the promises; as full as ever England was at her very worst. Israel clipped her Messianic promises and lived upon the clippings instead of upon the coin. Her coming Christ, and His salvation already begun, were the true spiritual currency of Old Testament times; while round that central Image of her great promise there ran an outside rim of lesser promises that all took their true and their only value from Him whose image and superscription stood within. But those besotted and infatuated men of Israel, instead of entering into and living by the great spiritual promises given to them in their Messiah, made lands, and houses, and meat, and drink, all the Messiah they cared for. Matthew Henry says that when we go to the merchant to buy goods, he gives us the paper and the pack-thread to the bargain. Well, those children and fools in Israel actually threw away the goods and hoarded and boasted over the paper and the pack-thread. Our old Scottish lawyers have made us familiar with the distinction in the church between *spiritualia* and *temporalia*. Well, the Jews let the *spiritualia* go to those who cared to take such things, while they held fast to the *temporalia*. And all that went on till His disciples had the effrontery to clip and coin under our Lord's very eyes, and even

to ask Him to hold the coin while they sharpened their shears. 'O faithless and perverse generation ! How long shall I be with you ? How long shall I suffer you ? Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip ? O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken ! And beginning at Moses and all the prophets He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.'

2. But those who live in glass houses must take care not to throw stones. And thus the greatest fool in Israel is safe from you and me. For, like them, and just as if we had never read one word about them, we bend our hearts and our children's hearts to things seen and temporal, and then, after things seen and temporal have all cast us off, we begin to ask if there is any solace or sweetness for a cast-off heart in things unseen and eternal. There are great gaps clipt out of our Bibles that not God Himself can ever print or paste in again. Look and see if half the Book of Proverbs, for instance, with all its noble promises to a godly youth, is not clipt clean out of your dismembered Bible. That fine leaf also, 'My son, give Me thine heart,' is clean gone out of the twenty-third chapter of the Proverbs years and years ago. As is the best part of the noble Book of Daniel, and almost the whole of Second Timothy. 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and meat and drink, and wife and child shall be added unto you.' Your suicidal shears have cut that golden promise for ever out of your Sermon on the Mount. So much so that if any or all of these temporal mercies ever

come to you, they will come of pure and undeserved mercy, for the time has long passed when you could plead any promise for them. Still, there are two most excellent uses left to which you can even yet put your mangled and dismembered Bible. You can make a splendid use of its gaps and of its gashes, and of those waste places where great promises at one time stood. You can make a grand use even of those gaps if you will descend into them and draw out of them humiliation and repentance, compunction, contrition, and resignation. And this use also: When you are moved to take some man who is still young into your confidence, ask him to let you see his Bible and then let him see yours, and point out to him the rents and wounds and wilderness places in yours. And thus, by these two uses of a clipped-up and half-empty Bible, you may make gains that shall yet set you above those whose Bibles of promises are still as fresh as when they came from God's own hand. And Samson said, I will now put forth a riddle unto you: Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.

3. 'Go out,' said the Lord of Mansoul, 'and apprehend Clip-Promise and bring him before me.' And they did so. 'Go down to Edinburgh to-night, and go to the door of such and such a church, and as he comes out arrest Clip-the-Commandments, for he has heard My word all this day again but will not do it.' Where would you be by midnight if God rose up in anger and swore at this moment that your disobedient time should be no longer? You would be speechless before such a charge, for

the shears are in your pocket at this moment with which you have clipped to pieces this Sabbath-day : shears red with the blood of the Fourth Commandment. For, when did you rise off your bed this resurrection morning ? And what did you do when you did rise ? What has your reading and your conversation been this whole Lord's day ? How full your heart would have been of faith and love and holiness by this time of night had you not despised the Lord of the Sabbath, and cast all His commandments and opportunities to you behind your back ? What private exercise have you had all day with your Father who sees in secret ? How often have you been on your knees, and where, and how long, and for what, and for whom ? What work of mercy have you done to-day, or determined to do to-morrow ? And so with all the divine commandments : Mosaic and Christian, legal and evangelical. Such as : A tenth of all I have given to thee ; a covenant with a wandering eye ; a mouth once speaking evil, is it now well watched ? not one vessel only, but all the vessels of thy body sanctified till every thought and imagination is well under the obedience of Christ. Lest His anger for all that begin to burn to-night, make your bed with Eli and Samuel in His sanctuary to-night, lest the avenger of the blood of the commandments leap out on you in your sleep !

4. The Old Serpent took with him the great shears of hell, and clipped 'Thou shalt surely die' out of the second chapter of Genesis. And the same enemy of mankind will clip all the terror of the Lord out of your heart to-night again, if he

can. And he will do it in this way, if he can. He will have some one at the church door ready and waiting for you. As soon as the blessing is pronounced, some one will take you by the arm and will entertain you with the talk you love, or that you once loved, till you will be ashamed to confess that there is any terror or turning to God in your heart. No! Thou shalt not surely die, says the serpent still. Why, hast thou not trampled Sabbaths and sermons past counting under thy feet? What commandment, laid on body or soul, hast thou not broken, and thou art still adding drunkenness to thirst, and God doth not know! 'The woman said unto the serpent, We may not eat of it, neither may we touch it, lest we die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die.'

5. You must all have heard of Clito, who used to say that he desired no more time for rising and dressing and saying his prayers than about a quarter of an hour. Well, that was clipping the thing pretty close, wasn't it? At the same time it must be admitted that a good deal of prayer may be got through in a quarter of an hour if you do not lose any moment of it. Especially in the first quarter of the day, if you are expeditious enough to begin to pray before you even begin to dress. And prayer is really a very strange experience. There are things about prayer that no man has yet fully found out or told to any. For one thing, once well begun it grows upon a man in a most extraordinary and unheard-of way. This same Clito, for instance, some time after we find

him at his prayers before his eyes are open ; and then he keeps all morning making his bath, his soap, his towels, his brushes, and his clothes all one long artifice of prayer. And that till there is not a single piece of his dressing-room furniture that is not ready to swear at the last day that its master long before he died had become a man full of secret prayer. There is a fountain filled with blood ! he exclaims, as he throws himself into his bath ; and Jeremiah second and twenty-second he uses regularly to repeat to himself half a dozen times a day as he washes the smoke and dust of the city off his hands and face. And then Revelation third and eighteenth till his toilet is completed. Nay, this same Clito has come to be such a devotee to that he had at one time been so expeditious with, that I have seen him forget himself on the street and think that his door was shut. But there is really no use telling you all that about Clito. For, till you try closet-prayer for yourself, all that God or man can say to you on that subject will be water spilt on the ground. All we can say is, Try it. Begin it. Some desperate day try it. Stop when you are on the way to the pond and try it. Stop when you are fastening up the rope and try it. When the poison is moving in the cup, stop, shut your door first. Try God first. See if He is still waiting. And, always after, when the steel shears of a too early, too crowded, and far too exacting day are clipping you out of all time for prayer, then what should you do ? What do you do when you simply cannot get your proper fresh air and exercise every day ?

Do you not fall back on the plasticity and pliability of nature and take your air and exercise in large parcels? You take a ride into the country two or three times a week. Or, two afternoons a week you have ten miles alone if you cannot get a godly friend. And then two or three times a year, if you can afford it, you climb an Alp or a Grampian every day for a week or a month; and, so gracious and so adaptable is human nature, that, what others get daily, you get weekly, or monthly, or quarterly, or yearly. And, though a soul is not to be too much presumed upon, Clito came to tell his friends that his soul could on occasion take in prayer and praise enough for a week in a single morning or afternoon, and, almost, for a whole year in a good holiday. As Christ Himself did when He said: Come away apart into a desert place and rest a while; for there are so many people coming and going here that we have no time so much as to eat.

6. But I see I must clip off my last point with you, which was to tell you what you already know only too well, and that is, what terrible shears a bad conscience is armed with, and what havoc she makes at all ages of a poor sinner's Bible. But you can spare that head. You can preach on that text to yourselves far better than all your ministers. Only, take home with you these two lines I have clipped out of Fraser of Brea for you. Nothing in man, he says to us, is to be a ground of despair, since the whole ground of all our hope is in Christ alone. Christ's relation is always to men as they are sinners and not as they are righteous. I came

not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. 'Tis with sinners, then, Christ has to do. Nothing damns but unbelief; and unbelief is just holding back from pressing God with this promise, that Christ came to save sinners. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, and it is still to be found standing in the most clipped-up Bible, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

## XI

## STIFF MR. LOTH-TO-STOOP

'Thy neck is an iron sinew,'—*Jehovah to the house of Jacob.*

'King Zedekiah humbled not himself, but stiffened his neck,'—*The Chronicles.*

'He humbled himself,'—*Paul on our Lord.*



ALL John Bunyan's Characters, Situations, and Episodes are collected into this house to-night. Obstinate and Pliable are here; Passion and Patience; Simple, Sloth, and Presumption; Madame Bubble and Mr. Worldly-wiseman; Talkative and By-ends; Deaf Mr. Prejudice is here also, and, sitting close beside him, stiff Mr. Loth-to-stoop; while good old Mr. Wet-eyes and young Captain Self-denial are not wholly wanting. It gives this house an immense and an ever-green interest to me to see character after character coming trooping in, Sabbath evening after Sabbath evening, each man to see himself and his neighbour in John Bunyan's so truthful and so fearless glass. But it stabs me to the heart with a mortal stab to see how few of us out of this weekly congregation are any better men after all we come to see and to hear. At the same time, such a constant dropping will surely in time wear away the hardest rock. Let that so stiff old man, then, stiff old Mr. Loth-to-

stoop, came forward and behold his natural face in John Bunyan's glass again to-night. 'Lord, is it I?' was a very good question, though put by a very bad man. Let us, one and all, then, put the traitor's question to ourselves to-night. Am I stiff old Loth-to-stoop?—let every man in this house say to himself all through this service, and then at home when reviewing the day, and then all to-morrow when to stoop will be so loathsome and so impossible to us all.

1. To begin, then, at the very bottom of this whole matter, take stiff old Loth-to-stoop as a guilty sinner in the sight of God. Let us take this stiff old man in this dreadful character to begin with, because it is in this deepest and most dreadful aspect of his nature and his character that he is introduced to us in the *Holy War*. And I shall stand aside and let John Bunyan himself describe Loth-to-stoop in the matter of his justification before God. 'That is a great stoop for a sinner to have to take,' says our apostolic author in another classical place, 'a too great stoop to have to suffer the total loss of all his own righteousness, and, actually, to have to look to another for absolutely everything of that kind. That is no easy matter for any man to do. I assure you it stretches every vein in his heart before he will be brought to yield to that. What! for a man to deny, reject, abhor, and throw away all his prayers, tears, alms, keeping of Sabbaths, hearing, reading, and all the rest, and to admit both himself and them to be abominable and accursed, and to be willing in the very midst of his sins to throw him-

self wholly upon the righteousness and obedience of another man ! I say to do that in deed and in truth is the biggest piece of the cross, and therefore it is that Paul calls it a suffering. "I have suffered the loss of all things that I might win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness." That is John Bunyan's characteristic comment on stiff old Loth-to-stoop as a guilty sinner, with the offer of a full forgiveness set before him.

2. And then our so truthful and so fertile author goes on to give us Loth-to-stoop as a half-saved sinner ; a sinner, that is, trying to make his own terms with God about his full salvation. Through three most powerful pages we see stiff old Loth-to-stoop engaged in beating down God's unalterable terms of salvation, and in bidding for his full salvation upon his own reduced and easy terms. It was the tremendous stoop of the Son of God from the throne of God to the cradle and the carpenter's shop ; and then, as if that were not enough, it was that other tremendous stoop of His down to the Garden and the Cross,—it was these two so tremendous stoops of Jesus Christ that made stiff old Loth-to-stoop's salvation even possible. But, with all that, his true salvation was not possible without stoop after stoop of his own ; stoop after stoop which, if not so tremendous as those of Christ, were yet tremendous enough, and too tremendous, for him. Old Loth-to-stoop carries on a long and a bold debate with Emmanuel in order to lessen the stoop that Emmanuel demands of him ; and your own life and mine, my brethren, at their deepest

and at their closest to our own heart, are really at bottom, like Loth-to-stoop's life, one long roup of salvation, in which God tries to get us up to His terms and in which we try to get Him down to our terms. His terms are, that we shall sell absolutely all that we have for the salvation of our souls; and our terms are, salvation or no salvation, to keep all that we have and to seek every day for more. God absolutely demands that we shall stoop to the very dust every day, till we become the poorest, the meanest, the most despicable, and the most hopeless of men; whereas we meet that divine demand with the proud reply—Is Thy servant a dog? It was with this offended mind that stiff old Loth-to-stoop at last left off from Emmanuel's presence; he would die rather than come down to such degrading terms. And as Loth-to-stoop went away, Emmanuel looked after him, well remembering the terrible night when He Himself was, not indeed like Loth-to-stoop, nor near like him, but when His own last stoop was so deep that it made Him cry out, Father, save Me from this hour! and again, If it be possible let this so tremendous stoop pass from Me. For a moment Emmanuel Himself was loth to stoop, but only for a moment. For He soon rose from off His face in a bath of blood, saying, Not My will, but Thine be done! When Thomas à Kempis is negotiating with the Loth-to-stoops of his unevangelical day, we hear him saying to them things like this: 'Jesus Christ was despised of men, forsaken of His friends and lovers, and in the midst of slanders. He was willing, under His Father's will, to suffer and to be despised, and

darest thou to complain of any man's usage of thee? Christ, thy Master, had enemies and back-biters, and dost thou expect to have all men to be thy friends and benefactors? Whence shall thy patience attain her promised crown if no adversity befall thee? Suffer thou with Jesus Christ, and for His sake, if thou wouldst reign with Him. Set thyself, therefore, to bear manfully the cross of thy Lord, who, out of love, was crucified for thee. Know for certain that thou must lead a daily dying life. And the more that thou diest to thyself all that the more shalt thou live unto God.' With many such words as these did Thomas teach the saints of his day to stoop to their daily cross; a daily cross then, which has now been for long to him and to them an everlasting crown.

3. And speaking of À Kempis, and having lately read some of his most apposite chapters, such as that on the Holy Fathers and that on Obedience and Subjection, leads me on to look at Loth-to-stoop when he enters the sacred ministry, as he sometimes does. When a half-converted, half-subdued, half-saved sinner gets himself called to the sacred ministry his office will either greatly hasten on his salvation, or else it will greatly hinder and endanger it. He will either stoop down every day to deeper and ever deeper depths of humility, or he will tower up in pride of office and in pride of heart past all hope of humility, and thus of salvation. The holy ministry is a great nursing-house of pride as we see in a long line of popes, and prelates, and priests, and other lords over God's heritage. And our own Presbyterian polity, while it hands down

to us the simplicity, the unity, the brotherhood, and the humility of the apostolic age, at the same time leaves plenty of temptation and plenty of opportunity for the pride of the human heart. Our preaching and pastoral office, when it is aright laid to our hearts, will always make us the meekest and the humblest of men, even when we carry the most magnificent of messages. But when our own hearts are not right the very magnificence of our message, and the very authority of our Master, become all so many subtle temptations to pride, pique, self-importance, and lothness-to-stoop. With so much still to learn, how slow we ministers are to stoop to learn ! How still we stand, and even go back, when all other men are going forward ! How few of us have made the noble resolution of Jonathan Edwards: 'Resolved,' he wrote, 'that, as old men have seldom any advantage of new discoveries because these are beside a way of thinking they have been long used to : resolved, therefore, if ever I live to years, that I shall be impartial to hear the reasons of all pretended discoveries, and to receive them, if rational, how long soever I have been used to another way of thinking.' Let all ministers, then, young and old, resolve to stoop with Jonathan Edwards, who shines, in his life and in his works, like the cherubim with knowledge, and burns like the seraphim with love.

And then, when, not having so resolved, our thin vein of youthful knowledge and experience has been worked to the rock ; when grey hairs are here and there upon us, how slow we are to stoop to that ! How unwilling we are to let it light on

our hearts that our time is past; that we are no longer able to understand, or interest, or attract the young; and, besides, that that is not all their blame, no, nor ours either, but simply the order and method of Divine Providence. How slow we are to see that Divine Providence has other men standing ready to take up our work if we would only humbly lay it down;—how loth we are to stoop to see all that! How unwilling we are to make up our minds, we old and ageing ministers, and to humble our hearts to accept an assistant or to submit to a colleague to stand alongside of us in our unaccomplished work!


4. In public life also, as we call it, what disasters to the state, to the services, and to society, are constantly caused by this same Loth-to-stoop! When he holds any public office; when he becomes the leader of a party; when he is promoted to be an adviser of the Crown; when he is put at the head of a fleet of ships, or of an army of men, what untold evils does Loth-to-stoop bring both on himself and on the nation! An old statesman will have committed himself to some line of legislation or of administration; a great captain will have committed himself to some manœuvre of a squadron or of a division, or to some plan of battle, and some subordinate will have discovered the error his leader has made, and will be bold to point it out to him. But stiff old Loth-to-stoop has taken his line and has passed his word. His honour, as he holds it, is committed to this announced line of action; and, if the Crown itself should perish before his policy, he will not stoop to change it. How often

you see that in great affairs as well as in small. How seldom you see a public man openly confessing that he has hitherto all along been wrong, and that he has at last and by others been set right. Not once in a generation. But even that once redeems public life ; it ennobles public life ; and it saves the nation and the sovereign who possess such a true patriot. Consistency and courage, independence and dignity, are high-sounding words ; but openness of mind, teachableness, diffidence, and humility always go with true nobility as well as with ultimate success and lasting honour.

## XII

THAT VARLET ILL-PAUSE, THE  
DEVIL'S ORATOR

'I made haste and delayed not.'—*David.*

JOHN BUNYAN shall himself introduce, describe, and characterise this varlet, this devil's ally and accomplice, this ancient enemy of Mansoul, whose name is Ill-pause. Well, this same Ill-pause, says our author, was the orator of Diabolus on all difficult occasions, nor took Diabolus any other one with him on difficult occasions, but just Ill-pause alone. And always when Diabolus had any special plot a-foot against Mansoul, and when the thing went as Diabolus would have it go, then would Ill-pause stand up, for he was Diabolus his orator. When Mansoul was under siege of Emmanuel his four noble captains sent a message to the men of the town that if they would only throw Ill-pause over the wall to them, that they might reward him according to his works, then they would hold a parley with the city; but if this varlet was to be let live in the city, then, why, the city must see to the consequences. At which Diabolus, who was there present, was loth to lose his orator, because, had the four captains once laid their fingers on Ill-pause, be sure his master had lost his orator. And, then,

in the last assault, we read that Ill-pause, the orator that came along with Diabolus, he also received a grievous wound in the head, some say that his brain-pan was cracked. This, at any rate, I have taken notice of, that never after this was he able to do that mischief to Mansoul as he had done in times past. And then there was also at Eye-gate that Ill-pause of whom you have heard before. The same was he that was orator to Diabolus. He did much mischief to the town of Mansoul, till at last he fell by the hand of the Captain Good-hope.

1. Well, to begin with, this Ill-pause was a filthy Diabolonian varlet; a treacherous and a villainous old varlet, the author of the *Holy War* calls him. Now, what is a varlet? Well, a varlet is just a broken-down old valet. A varlet is a valet who has come down, and down, and down, and down again in the world, till, from once having been the servant and the trusty friend of the very best of masters, he has come to be the ally and accomplice of the very worst of masters. His first name, the name of his first office, still sticks to him, indeed; but, like himself, and with himself, his name has become depraved and corrupted till you would not know it. A varlet, then, is just short and sharp for a scoundrel who is ready for anything; and the worse the thing is the more ready he is for it. There are riff-raff and refuse always about who are ready to volunteer for any filibustering expedition; and that full as much for the sheer devilry of the enterprise as for any real profit it is to be to themselves. Wherever mischief is to be done, there your true varlet is sure to turn up. Well, just such a

land-shark was this Ill-pause, who was such an ally and accomplice to Diabolus that he had need for no other. What possible certificate in evil could exceed this—that the devil took not any with him when he went out on his worst errand but this same Ill-pause, who was his orator on all his most difficult occasions?

2. Ill-pause was a varlet, then, and he was also an orator. Now, an orator, as you know, is a great speaker. An orator is a man who has the excellent and influential gift of public speech. And on great occasions in public life when people are to be instructed, and impressed, and moved, and won over, then the great orator sets up his platform. Quintilian teaches us in his *Institutes* that it is only a good man who can be a really great orator. What would that fine writer have said had he lived to read the *Holy War*, and seen the most successful of all orators that ever opened a mouth, and who was all the time a diabolical old varlet? What would the author of *The Education of an Orator* have said to that? Diabolus did not on every occasion bring up his great orator Ill-pause. He did not always come up himself, and he did not always send up Ill-pause. It was only on difficult occasions that both Diabolus and his orator also came up. You do not hear your great preachers every Sabbath. They would not long remain great preachers, and you would soon cease to pay any attention to them, if they were always in the pulpit. Neither do you have your great orators at every street corner. Their masters only build theatres for them when some great occasion arises in the land, and when the best wisdom must straightway be spoken to the people

and in the best way. Then you bring up Quintilian's orator if you have him at your call. As Diabolus has done from time to time with his great and almost always successful orator Ill-pause. On difficult occasions he came himself on the scene and Ill-pause with him. On such difficult occasions as in the Garden of Eden ; as when Noah was told to make haste and build an ark ; as also when Abraham was told to make haste and leave his father's house ; when Jacob was bid remember and pay the vow he had made when his trouble was upon him ; as also when Joseph had to flee for what was better than life ; and on that memorable occasion when David sent Joab out against Rabbah, but David tarried still at Jerusalem. On all these essential, first-class, and difficult occasions the old serpent brought up Ill-pause. As also when our Lord was in the wilderness ; when He set His face to go up to Jerusalem ; when He saw certain Greeks among them that came up to the pass-over ; as also again and again in the Garden. As also on crucial occasions in your own life. As when you had been told not to eat, not to touch, and not even to look at the forbidden fruit, then Ill-pause, the devil's orator, came to you and said that it was a tree to be desired. And, you shall not surely die. As also when you were moved to terror and to tears under a Sabbath, or under a sermon, or at some death-bed, or on your own sick-bed—Ill-pause got you to put off till a more convenient season your admitted need of repentance and reformation and peace with God. On such difficult occasions as these the devil took Ill-pause to help him with you,

and the result, from the devil's point of view, has justified his confidence in his orator. When Ill-pause gets his new honours paid him in hell; when there is a new joy in hell over another sinner that has not yet repented, your name will be heard sounding among the infernal cheers. Just think of your baptismal name and your pet name at home giving them joy to-night at their supper in hell! And yet one would not at first sight think that such triumphs and such toasts, such medals, and clasps, and garters were to be won on earth or in hell just by saying such simple-sounding and such commonplace things as those are for which Ill-pause receives his decorations. 'Take time,' he says. 'Yes,' he admits, 'but there is no such hurry; to-morrow will do; next year will do; after you are old will do quite as well. The darkness shall cover you, and your sin will not find you out. Christ died for sin, and it is a faithful saying that His blood will cleanse you later on from all this sin.' Everyday and well-known words, indeed, but a true orator is seen in nothing more than in this, that he can take up what everybody knows and says, and put it so as to carry everybody captive. One of Quintilian's own orators has said that a great speaker only gives back to his hearers in flood what they have already given to him in vapour.

3. 'I was always pleased,' says Calvin, 'with that saying of Chrysostom, "The foundation of our philosophy is humility"; and yet more pleased with that of Augustine: "As," says he, "the rhetorician being asked, What was the first thing in the rules of eloquence? he answered, Pronunciation; what was

the second? Pronunciation; what was the third? and still he answered, Pronunciation. So if you would ask me concerning the precepts of the Christian religion, I would answer, firstly, secondly, thirdly, and for ever, Humility.”” And when Ill-pause opened his elocutionary school for the young orators of hell, he is reported to have said this to them in his opening address, ‘There are only three things in my school,’ he said; ‘three rules, and no more to be called rules. The first is Delay, the second is Delay, and the third is Delay. Study the art of delay, my sons; make all your studies to tell on how to make the fools delay. Only get those to whom your master sends you to delay, and you will not need to envy me my laurels; you will soon have a shining crown of your own. Get the father to delay teaching his little boy how to pray. Get him on any pretext you can invent to put off speaking in private to his son about his soul. Get him to delegate all that to the minister. And then by hook or by crook get that son as he grows up to put off the Lord’s Supper. And after that you will easily get him to put off purity and prayer till he is a married man and at the head of a house. Only get the idea of a more convenient season well into their heads, and their game is up, and your spurs are won. Take their arm in yours, as I used to do, at their church door, if you are posted there, and say to them as they come out that to-morrow will be time enough to give what they had thought of giving while they were still in their pew and the minister or missionary was still in the pulpit. Only, as you value your master’s praises and the applause of all this place,

keep them, at any cost, from striking while the iron is hot. Let them fill their hearts, and their mouths too, if it gives them any comfort, with the best intentions; only, my scholars, remember that the beginning and middle and end of your office is by hook or by crook to secure delay.' And a great crop of young orators sprang up ready for their work under that teaching and out of the persuasion school of Ill-pause. 'In fine, Mansoul desired some time in which to prepare its answer.'

There are many men among ourselves who have been bedevilled out of their best life, out of the salvation of their souls, and out of all that constitutes and accompanies salvation now for many years. And still their sin-deceived hearts are saying to them to-night, Take time! For many years, every new year, every birthday, and, for a long time, every Communion-day, they were just about to be done with their besetting sin; and now all the years lie behind them, one long downward road all paved, down to this Sabbath night, with the best intentions. And, still, as if that were not enough, that same varlet is squat at their ear. Well, my very miserable brother, you have long talked about the end of an old year and the beginning of a new year as being your set time for repentance and for reformation. Let all the weight of those so many remorseful years fall on your heart at the close of this year, and at last compel you to take the step that should have been taken, oh! so many unhappy years ago! Go straight home then, to-night, shut your door, and, after so many desecrated Sabbath nights, God will still meet

you in your secret chamber. As soon as you shut your door God will be with you, and you will be with God. With God! Think of it, my brother, and the thing is done. With God! And then tell Him all. And if any one knocks at your door, say that there is Some One with you to-night, and that you cannot come down. And continue till you have told it all to God. He knows it all already; but that is one of Ill-pause's sophistries still in your heart. Tell your Father it all. Tell Him how many years it is. Tell Him all that you so well remember over all those wild, miserable, mad, remorseful years. Tell Him that you have not had one really happy, one really satisfied day all those years, and tell Him that you have spent all, and are now no longer a young man; youth and health and self-respect and self-command are all gone, till you are a shipwreck rather than a man. And tell Him that if He will take you back that you are to-night at His feet.

4. 'We seldom overcome any one vice perfectly,' complains À Kempis. And, again, 'If only every new year we would root out but one vice.' Well, now, what do you say to that, my true and very brethren? What do you say to that? Here we are, by God's grace and long-suffering to usward, near the end of another year, another vicious year; and why have we been borne with through so many vicious years but that we should now cease from vice and begin to learn virtue? Why are we here over Ill-pause this Sabbath night? Why, but that we should shake off that varlet liar before another new year. That is the whole reason why we have

been spared to see this Sabbath night. God decreed it for us that we should have this text and this discourse here to-night, and that is the reason why you and I have been so unaccountably spared so long. Let us select one vice for the axe then to-night, and give God in heaven the satisfaction of seeing that His long-suffering with us has not been wholly in vain. Let us lay the axe at one vice from this night. And what one from among so many shall it be? What is the mockery of preaching if a preacher does not practise? And, accordingly, I have selected one vice out of my thicket for next year. Will you do the same? The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him. Just make your selection and keep it to yourself, at least till you are able this time next year to say to us—Come, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what He hath done for my soul. Yes, come on, and from this day all your days on earth, and all the days of eternity, you will thank God for John Bunyan and his *Holy War* and his Ill-pause. Make your selection, then, for your new axe. Attack some one sin at this so auspicious season. Swear before God, and unknown to all men—swear sure death, and that without any more delay, to that selected sin. Never once, all your days, do that sin again. Determine never once to do it again. Determine that by prayer, by secret, and at the same time outspoken, prayer on your knees. Determine it by faith in the cleansing blood and renewing spirit of Jesus Christ. Determine it by fear of instant death, and by sure hope of everlasting life. Determine it by reasons, and motives, and arguments, and encouragements known to no

one but yourself, and to be suspected by no human being. Name the doomed sin. Denounce it. Execrate it. Execute it. Draw a line across your short and uncertain life, and say to that besetting and presumptuous sin, Hitherto, and no further! Do not say you cannot do it. You can if you only will. You can if you only choose. And smiting down that one sin will loosen and shake down the whole evil fabric of sin. Breaking but that one link will break the whole of Satan's snare and evil fetter. Here is A Kempis's forest of vices out of which he hewed down one every year. Restless lust, outward senses, empty phantoms, always longing to get, always sparing to give, careless as to talk, unwilling to sit silent, eager for food, wakeful for news, weary of a good book, quick to anger, easy of offence at my neighbour, and too ready to judge him, too merry over prosperity, and too gloomy, fretful, and peevish in adversity; so often making good rules for my future life, and coming so little speed with them all, and so on. And, in facing even such a terrible thicket as that, let not even an old man absolutely despair. At forty, at sixty, at threescore and ten, let not an old penitent despair. Only take axe in hand and see if the sun does not stand still upon Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon till you have avenged yourself on your enemies. And always when you stop to wipe your brow, and to whet the edge of your axe, and to wet your lips with water, keep on saying things like those of another great sinner deep in his thicket of vice, say this: O God, he said, Thou hast not cut off as a weaver my life, nor from day even to night hast

Thou made an end of me. But Thou hast vouchsafed to me life and breath even to this hour from childhood, youth, and hitherto even unto old age. He holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to slide, rescuing me from perils, sicknesses, poverty, bondage, public shame, evil chances; keeping me from perishing in my sins, and waiting patiently for my full conversion. Glory be to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee, for Thine incomprehensible and unimaginable goodness toward me of all sinners far and away the most unworthy. The voices and the concert of voices of angels and men be to Thee; the concert of all thy saints in heaven and of all Thy creatures in heaven and on earth; and of me, beneath their feet an unworthy and wretched sinner, Thy abject creature; my praise also, now, in this day and hour, and every day till my last breath, and till the end of this world, and then to all eternity, where they cease not saying, To Him who loved us, Amen!

## XIII

MR. PENNY-WISE-AND-POUND-FOOLISH,  
AND MR. GET-I'-THE-HUNDRED-AND-  
LOSE-I'-THE-SHIRE

‘For, what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?’—*Our Lord.*



HIS whole world is the penny, and our own souls are the pound. This whole world is the hundred, while heaven itself is the shire. And the question this evening is, Are we wise in the penny and foolish in the pound? And, are we getting in the hundred and losing in the shire?

1. Well, then, to begin at the beginning, we are already begun to be penny-wise and pound-foolish with our children when we are so particular with them about their saying their little prayers night and morning, while all the time we are so inattentive and so indolent to explain to them how they are to pray, what they are to pray for, and how they are to wait and how long they are to wait for the things they pray for. Then, again, we are penny-wise and pound-foolish with our children when we train them up into all the proprieties and etiquettes of family and social life, and at the same time pay so little attention to their inward life of opening thought and quickening desire and

awakening passion. When we are so eager also for our children to be great with great people, without much regard to the moral and religious character of those great people, then again we are like a man who may be wise for a penny, but is certainly a fool for a pound. When we prefer the gay and the fashionable world to the intellectual, the religious, and the philanthropical world for our children, then we lose both the penny and the pound as well. Almost as much as we do when we accept the penny of wealth and station and so-called connection for a son or a daughter, in room of the pound of character, and intelligence, and personal religion.

Then, again, even in our own religious life we are ourselves often and notoriously wise in the penny and foolish in the pound. As, for instance, when we are so scrupulous and so conscientious about forms and ceremonies, about times and places, and so on. In short, the whole ritual that has risen up around spiritual religion in all our churches, from that of the Pope himself out to that of George Fox—it is all the penny rather than the pound. This rite and that ceremony; this habit and that tradition; this ancient and long-established usage, as well as that new departure and that threatened innovation;—it is all, at its best, always the penny and never the pound. Satan busied me about the lesser matters of religion, says James Fraser of Brea, and made me neglect the more substantial points. He made me tithe to God my mint, and my anise and my cummin, and many other of my herbs, to my all but complete neglect of justice and

mercy and faith and love. Whether there are any of the things that Brea would call mint and anise and cummin that are taking up too much of the time of our controversially-minded men in all our churches, highland and lowland, to-day is a matter for humbling thought. Labour, my brethren, for yourselves, at any rate, to get yourselves into that sane and sober habit of mind that instantly and instinctively puts all mint and all cummin of all kinds into the second place, and all the weightier matters, both of law and of gospel, into the first place. I wasted myself on too nice points, laments Brea in his deep, honest, clear-eyed autobiography. I did not proportion my religious things aright. The laird of Brea does not say in as many words that he was wise in the penny and foolish in the pound, but that is exactly what he means.

Then, again, the narrowness, the partiality, the sickliness, and the squeamishness of our consciences,—all that makes us to be too often penny-wise and pound-foolish in our religious life. A well-instructed, thoroughly wise, and well-balanced conscience is an immense blessing to that man who has purchased such a conscience for himself. There is an immense and a criminal waste of conscience that goes on among some of our best Christian people through the want of light and space, room, and breadth, and balance in their consciences. We are all pestered with people every day who are full of all manner of childish scrupulosity and sickly squeamishness in their ill-nourished, ill-exercised consciences. As long as a man's conscience is ignorant and weak and sickly it will, it must, spend

and waste itself on the pennyworths of religion and morals instead of the pounds. It will occupy and torture itself with points and punctilios, jots and tittles, to the all but total oblivion, and to the all but complete neglect, of the substance and the essence of the Christian mind, the Christian heart, and the Christian character. The washing of hands, of cups, and of pots, was all the conscience that multitudes had in our Lord's day ; and multitudes in our day scatter and waste their consciences on the same things. A good man, an otherwise good and admirable man, will absolutely ruin and destroy his conscience by points and scruples and traditions of men as fatally as another will by a life of debauchery. Some old and decayed ecclesiastical rubric ; some absolutely indifferent form in public worship ; some small casuistical question about a creed or a catechism ; some too nice point of confessional interpretation ; the mint and anise and cummin of such matters will fill and inflame and poison a man's mind and heart and conscience for months and for years, to the total destruction of all that for which churches and creeds exist ; to the total suspense, if not the total and lasting destruction, of sobriety of mind, balance and breadth of judgment, humility, charity, and a hidden and a holy life. The penny of a perverted, partial, and fanaticised conscience has swallowed up the pound of instruction, and truth, and justice, and brotherly love.

2. 'Nor is the man with the long name at all inferior to the other,' said Lucifer, in laying his infernal plot against the peace and prosperity of

Mansoul. Now, the man with the long name was just Mr. Get-i'-the-hundred-and-lose-i'-the-shire. A hundred in the old county geography of England was a political subdivision of a shire, in which five score freemen lived with their freeborn families. A county or a shire was described and enumerated by the poll-sheriff of that day as containing so many enfranchised hundreds; and the total number of hundreds made up the political unity of the shire. To this day we still hear from time to time of the 'Chiltern Hundreds,' which is a division of Buckinghamshire that belongs, along with its political franchise, to the Crown, and which is utilised for Crown purposes at certain political emergencies. This proverb, then, to get i' the hundred and lose i' the shire, is now quite plain to us. You might canvass so as to get a hundred, several hundreds, many hundreds on your side, and yet you might lose when it came to counting up the whole shire. You might possess yourself of a hundred or two and yet be poor compared with him who possessed the whole shire. And then the proverb has been preserved out of the old political life of England, and has been moralised and spiritualised to us in the *Holy War*. And thus after to-night we shall always call this shrewd proverb to mind when we are tempted to take a part at the risk of the whole; to receive this world at the loss of the next world; or, as our Lord has it, to gain the whole world and to lose our own soul. Lot's choice of Sodom and Gomorrah, and Esau's purchase of the mess of pottage in the Old Testament; and then Judas's thirty pieces of silver, and Ananias and Sapphira's

part of the price in the New Testament, are all so many well-known instances of getting in the hundred and losing in the shire. And not Esau's and Lot's only, but our own lives also have been full up to to-day of the same fatal transaction. This house, as our Lord again has it, this farm, this merchandise, this shop, this office, this salary, this honour, this home—all this on the one hand, and then our Lord Himself, His call, His cause, His Church, with everlasting life in the other—when it is set down before us in black and white in that way, the transaction, the proposal, the choice is preposterous, is insane, is absolutely impossible. But preposterous, insane, absolutely impossible, and all, there it is, in our own lives, in the lives of our sons and daughters, and in the lives of multitudes of other men and other men's sons and daughters besides ours. Every day you will be taken in, and you will stand by and see other men taken in, with the present penny for the future pound: and with the poor pelting hundred under your eye for the full, far-extending, and ever-enriching shire. Lucifer is always abroad pressing on us in his malice the penny on the spot, for the pound which he keeps out of sight; he dazzles our eyes with the gain of the hundred till we gnash our teeth at the loss of the shire.

‘He hath in sooth good cause for endless grief,  
Who, for the love of thing that lasteth not,  
Despoils himself for ever of THAT LOVE.’

3. ‘What also if we join with those two another two of ours, Mr. Sweet-world and Mr. Present-good, namely, for they are two men full of civility and

cunning. Let these engage in this business for us, and let Mansoul be taken up with much business, and if possible with much pleasure, and this is the way to get ground of them. Let us but cumber and occupy and amuse Mansoul sufficiently, and they will make their castle a warehouse for goods instead of a garrison for men of war.' This diabolical advice was highly applauded all through hell till all the lesser devils, while setting themselves to carry it out, gnashed their teeth with envy and malice at Lucifer for having thought of this masterpiece and for having had it received with such loud acclamation. 'Only get them,' so went on that so able, so well-envied, and so well-hated devil, 'let us only get those fribble sinners for a night at a time to forget their misery. And it will not cost us much to do that. Only let us offer them in one another's houses a supper, a dance, a pipe, a newspaper full of their own shame, a tale full of their own folly, a silly song, and He who loved them with an everlasting love will soon see of the travail of His soul in them!' Yes, my fellow-sinners, Lucifer and his infernal crew know us and despise us and entrap us at very little trouble, till He who travailed for us on the tree covers His face in heaven and weeps over us. As long as we remember our misery, all the mind, and all the malice, and all the sleeplessness in hell cannot touch a hair of our head. But when by any emissary and opportunity either from earth around us or from hell beneath us we for another night forget our misery, it is all over with us. And yet, to tell the truth, we never can quite forget our

misery. We are too miserable ever to forget our misery. In the full steam of Lucifer's best-spread supper, amid the shouts of laughter and the clapping of hands, and all the outward appearance of a complete forgetfulness of our misery, yet it is not so. It is far from being so. Our misery is far too deep-seated for all the devil's drugs. Only, to give Lucifer his due, we do sometimes, under him, so get out of touch with the true consolation for our misery that, night after night, through cumber, through pursuit of pleasure, through the time being taken up with these and other like things, we do so far forget our misery as to lie down without dealing with it; but only to have it awaken us, and take our arm as its own for another miserable day. Yes; though never completely successful, yet this masterpiece of hell is sufficiently successful for Satan's subtlest purposes; which are, not to make us forget our misery, but to make us put it away from us at the natural and proper hour for facing it and for dealing with it in the only proper and successful way. But, wholly, any night, or even partially for a few nights at a time, to forget our misery—no, with all thy subtlety of intellect and with all thy hell-filled heart, O Lucifer, that is to us impossible! Forget our misery! O devil of devils, no! Bless God, that can never be with us! Our misery is too deep, too dreadful, too acute, too all-consuming ever to be forgotten by us even for an hour. Our misery is too terrible for thee, with all thy overthrown intellect and all thy malice-filled heart, ever to understand! Didst thou for one midnight hour taste it, and so understand it, then there would be

the same hope for thee that, I bless God, there still is for me !

Let us bend all our strength and all our wit to this, went on Lucifer, to make their castle a warehouse instead of a garrison. Let us set ourselves and all our allies, he explained to the duller-witted among the devils, to make their hearts a shop,—some of them, you know, are shopkeepers ; a bank,—some of them are bankers ; a farm,—some of them are farmers ; a study,—some of them are students ; a pulpit,—some of them like to preach ; a table,—some of them are gluttons ; a drawing-room,—some of them are busybodies who forget their own misery in retailing other people's misery from house to house. Be wise as serpents, said the old serpent ; attend, each several fallen angel of you, to his own special charge. Study your man. Get to the bottom of your man. Follow him about ; never let him out of your sight ; be sure before you begin, be sure you have the joint in his harness, the spot in his heel, the chink in his wall full in your eye. I do not surely need to tell you not to scatter our snares for souls at random, he went on. Give the minister his study Bible, the student his classic, the merchant his ledger, the glutton his well-dressed dish and his elect year of wine, the gossip her sweet secret, and the flirt her fool. Study them till they are all naked and open to your sharp eyes. Find out what best makes them forget even for one night their misery and ply them with that. If I ever see that soul I have set thee over on his knees on account of his misery I shall fling thee on the spot into the bottomless pit. And if any of you shall anywhere

discover a man—and there are such men—a man who forgets his misery through always thinking and speaking about it, only keep him in his pulpit, and off his knees, and no man so safe for hell as he. There are fools, and there are double-dyed fools, and that man is the chief of them. Give him his fill of sin and misery; let him luxuriate himself in sin and misery; only, keep him there, and I will not forget thy most excellent service to me.

Make all their hearts, so Lucifer summed up, as he dismissed his obsequious devils, make all their several hearts each a warehouse, a shop, a farm, a pulpit, a library, a nursery, a supper-table, a chamber of wantonness—let it be to each man just after his own heart. Only, keep—as you shall answer for it,—keep faith and hope and charity and innocence and patience and especially prayerfulness out of their hearts. And when this my counsel is fulfilled, and when the pit closes over thy charge, I shall pay thee thy wages, and promote thee to honour. And before he was well done they were all at their posts.

## XIV

## THE DEVIL'S LAST CARD

'Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.'—*Paul*.



WODROW has an anecdote in his delightful *Analecta* which shall introduce us into our subject to-night. Mr. John Menzies was a very pious and devoted pastor; he was a learned man also, and well seen in the Popish and in the Arminian controversies. And to the end of his life he was much esteemed of the people of Aberdeen as a foremost preacher of the gospel. And yet, 'Oh to have one more Sabbath in my pulpit!' he cried out on his death-bed. 'What would you then do?' asked some one who sat at his bedside. 'I would preach to my people on the tremendous difficulty of salvation!' exclaimed the dying man.

1. Now, the first difficulty that stands in the way of our salvation is the stupendous mass of guilt that has accumulated upon all of us. Our guilt is so great that we dare not think of it. It is too horrible to believe that we shall ever be called to account for one in a thousand of it. It crushes our minds with a perfect stupor of horror, when for a moment we try to imagine a day of judgment when we shall be judged for all the deeds that we have

done in the body. Heart-beat after heart-beat, breath after breath, hour after hour, day after day, year after year, and all full of sin; all nothing but sin from our mother's womb to our grave. Sometimes one outstanding act of sin has quite overwhelmed us. But before long that awful sin fell out of sight and out of mind. Other sins of the same kind succeeded it. Our sense of sin, our sense of guilt was soon extinguished by a life of sin, till, at the present moment the accumulated and tremendous load of our sin and guilt is no more felt by us than we feel the tremendous load of the atmosphere. But, all the time, does not our great guilt lie sealed down upon us? Because we are too seared and too stupefied to feel it, is it therefore not there? Because we never think of it, does that prove that both God and man have forgiven and forgotten it? Shall the Judge of all the earth do right in the matter of all men's guilt but ours? Does the apostle's warning not hold in our case?—his awful warning that we shall all stand before the judgment-seat? And is it only a strong figure of speech that the books shall be opened till we shall cry to the mountains to fall on us and to the rocks to cover us? Oh no! the truth is, the half has not been told us of the speechless stupefaction that shall fall on us when the trumpet shall sound and when Alp upon Alp of aggravated guilt shall rise up high as heaven between us and our salvation. Difficulty is not the name for guilt like ours. Impossibility is the better name we should always know it by.

2. Another difficulty or impossibility to our

salvation rises out of the awful corruption and pollution of our hearts. But is there any use entering on that subject? Is there one man in a hundred who even knows the rudiments of the language I must now speak in? Is there one man in a hundred in whose mind any idea arises, and in whose heart any emotion or passion is kindled, as I proceed to speak of corruption of nature and pollution of heart? I do not suppose it. I do not presume upon it. I do not believe it. That most miserable man who is let down of God's Holy Spirit into the pit of corruption that is in his own heart,—to him his corruption, added to his guilt, causes a sadness that nothing in this world can really relieve; it causes a deep and an increasing melancholy, such as the ninety and nine who need no repentance and feel no pollution know nothing of. All living men flee from the corruption of an unburied corpse. The living at once set about to bury their dead. 'I am a stranger and a sojourner among you,' said Abraham to the children of Heth; 'give me a possession of a burying-place among you that I may bury my dead out of my sight.' But Paul could find no grave in the whole world in which to bury out of his sight the body of death to which he was chained fast; that body of sin and death which always makes the holiest of men the most wretched of men,—till the loathing and the disgust and the misery that filled the apostle's heart are to be understood by but one in a thousand even of the people of God.

3. And then, as if to make our salvation a very

hyperbole of impossibility, the all but almighty power of indwelling sin comes in. Have you ever tried to break loose from the old fetter of an evil habit? Have you ever said on a New Year's Day with Thomas à Kempis that this year you would root that appetite,—naming it,—out of your body, and that vice,—naming it,—out of your heart? Have you ever sworn at the Communion table that you would watch and pray, and set a watch on your evil heart against that envy, and that revenge, and that ill-will, and that distaste, dislike, and antipathy? Then your minister will not need to come back from his death-bed to preach to you on the difficulty of salvation.

4. And yet such is the grace of God, such is the work of Christ, and such is the power and the patience of the Holy Ghost that, if we had only an adequate ministry in our pulpits, and an assisting literature in our homes, even this three-fold impossibility would be overcome and we would be saved. But if the ministry that is set over us is an ignorant, indolent, incompetent, self-deceived ministry; if our own chosen, set-up, and maintained minister is himself an uninstructed, unspiritual, unsanctified man; and if the books we buy and borrow and read are all secular, unspiritual, superficial, ephemeral, silly, stupid, impertinent books, then the impossibility of our salvation is absolute, and we are as good as in hell already with all our guilt and all our corruption for ever on our heads. Now, that was the exact case of Mansoul in the allegory of the Holy War at one of the last and acutest stages of that war. Or,

rather, that would have been her exact case had Diabolus got his own deep, diabolical way with her. For what did her ancient enemy do but sound a parley till he had played his last card in these glozing and deceitful words;—‘I myself,’ he had the face to say to Emmanuel, ‘if Thou wilt raise Thy siege and leave the town to me, I will, at my own proper cost and charge, set up and maintain a sufficient ministry, besides lecturers, in Mansoul, who shall show to Mansoul that transgression stands in the way of life; the ministers I shall set up shall also press the necessity of reformation according to Thy holy law.’ And even now, with the two pulpits, God’s and the devil’s, and the two preachers, and the two pastors, in our own city,—how many of you see any difference, or think that the one is any worse or any better than the other? Or, indeed, that the ministry of the last card is not the better of the two to your interest and to your taste, to the state of your mind and to the need of your heart? Let us proceed, then, to look at Mansoul’s two pulpits and her two lectureships as they stand portrayed on the devil’s last card and in Emmanuel’s crowning commission; that is, if our eyes are sharp enough to see any difference.

5. The first thing, then, on the devil’s last card was this, ‘A sufficient ministry, besides lecturers, in Mansoul.’ Now, a sufficient ministry has never been seen in the true Church of Christ since her ministry began. And yet she has had great ministers in her time. After Christ Himself, Paul was the greatest and the best minister the Church

of Christ has ever had. But such was the transcendent greatness of his office, such were its tremendous responsibilities, such were its magnificent opportunities and its incessant demands, such were its ceaseless calls to consecration, to cross-bearing, to crucifixion, to more and more inwardness of holiness, and to higher and higher heights of heavenly-mindedness, that the apostle was fain to cry out continually, Who is sufficient for these things! But so well did Paul learn that gospel which he preached to others that amid all his insufficiency he was able to hear his Master saying to him every day, My grace is sufficient for thee, and, My strength is made perfect in thy weakness! And to come down to the truly Pauline succession of ministers in our own lands and in our own churches, what preachers and what pastors Christ gave to Kidderminster, and to Bedford, and to Down and Connor, and to Sodor and Man, and to Anwoth, and to Ettrick, and to New England, and to St. Andrews, and places too many to mention. With all its infirmity and all its inefficiency, what a truly heavenly power the pulpit is when it is filled by a man of God who gives his whole mind and heart, his whole time and thought to it, and to the pastorate that lies around it. His mind may be small, and his heart may be full of corruption; his time may be full of manifold interruptions, and his best study may yield but a poor result; but if Heaven ever helps those who honestly help themselves, then that is certainly the case in the Christian ministry. Let the choicest of our children, then, be sought

out and consecrated to that service ; let our most gifted and most gracious-minded sons be sent to where they shall be best prepared for the pulpit and the pastorate,—till by the blessing of her Head all the congregations and all the parishes, all the pulpits and all the lectureships in the Church, shall be one garden of the Lord. And then we shall escape that last curse of a ministry such as John Bunyan saw all around him in the England of his day, and which, had he been alive in the England and Scotland of our day, he would have painted again in colours we have neither the boldness nor the skill to mix nor to put on the canvas. But let all ministers put it every day to themselves to what descent and succession they belong. Let those even who believe that they have within themselves the best seal and evidence attainable here that they have been ordained of Emmanuel, let them all the more look well every day and every Sabbath day how much of another master's doctrine and discipline, motives, and manners still mixes up with their best ministry. And the surest seal that, with all our insufficiency, we are still the ministers of Christ will be set on us by this, that the harder we work and the more in secret we pray, the more and ever the more shall we discover and confess our shameful insufficiency, and the more shall we, till the day of our death, every day still begin our ministry of labour and of prayer anew. Let us do that, for the devil, with all his boldness and all his subtilty, never threw a card first or last like that.

6. After offering a sufficient ministry to Mansoul,

and that, too, at his own proper cost and charge, Diabolus undertook also to see that the absolute necessity of a reformation should be preached and pressed from the pulpit he set up. Now, reformation is all good and necessary, in its own time and place and order, but God sent His Son not to be a Reformer but to be a Redeemer. John came to preach reformation, but Jesus came to preach regeneration. Except a man be born again, Jesus persistently preached to Nicodemus. 'Did it begin with regeneration?' was Dr. Duncan's reply when a sermon on sanctification was praised in his hearing. And like so much else that the learned and profound Dr. John Duncan said on theology and philosophy, that question went at once to the root of the matter. For sanctification, that is to say, salvation, is no mere reformation of morals or refinement of manners. It is a maxim in sound morals that the morality of the man must precede the morality of his actions. And much more is it the evangelical law of Jesus Christ. Make the tree good, our Lawgiver aphoristically said. Reformation and sanctification differ, says Dr. Hodge, as clean clothes differ from a clean heart. Now, Diabolus was all for clean clothes when he saw that Mansoul was slipping out of his hands. He would have all the drunkards to become moderate drinkers, if not total abstainers; and all the sensualists to become, if need be, ascetics; and all those who had sowed out their wild oats to settle down as heads of houses, and members, if not ministers and elders, in his set-up church. But we are too well taught, surely; we have gone too long to another church

than that which Diabolus ever sets up, to be satisfied with his superficial doctrine and his skin-deep discipline. We know, do we not, that we may do all that his last card asks us to do, and yet be as far, ay, and far farther from salvation than the heathen are who never heard the name. A hundred Scriptures tell us that; and our hearts know too much of their own plague and corruption ever now to be satisfied short of a full regeneration and a complete sanctification. 'Create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit within me. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' The last card has many Scriptures cunningly copied upon it; but not these. Its pulpit orators handle many Scripture texts, but never these.

7. Yes, the devil comes in even here with that so late, so subtle, and so contradicting card of his. Where is it in this world that he does not come in with some of his cards? And he comes in here as a very angel of evangelical light. He puts on the gown of Geneva here, and he ascends Emmanuel's own maintained pulpit here, and from that pulpit he preaches, and where he so preaches he preaches nothing else but the very highest articles of the Reformed faith. Carnal-security was strong on assurance, no other man in Mansoul was so strong; and the devil will let us preachers be as strong and as often on election, and justification, and indefectible grace, and the perseverance of the saints as we and our people like, if we but keep in season

and out of season on these transcendent subjects, and keep off morals and manners, walk and conversation, conduct and character. In Hooker's and Travers' day, Thomas Fuller tells us, the Temple pulpit preached pure Canterbury in the morning and pure Geneva in the afternoon. And you will get the highest Calvinism off the last card in one pulpit, and the strictest and most urgent morality off the same card in another; but never, if the devil can help it, never both in one and the same pulpit; never both in one and the same sermon; and never both in one and the same minister. You have all heard of the difficulty the voyager had in steering between Scylla and Charybdis in the Latin adage. Well, the true preacher's difficulty is just like that. Indeed, it is beyond the wit of man, and it takes all the wit of God, aright to unite the doctrine of our utter inability with the companion doctrine of our strict responsibility; free grace with a full reward; the cross of Christ once for all, with the saint's continual crucifixion; the Saviour's blood with the sinner's; and atonement with attainment; in short, salvation without works with no salvation without works. Deft steersman as the devil is, he never yet took his ship clear through those Charybdis passages.

One thing there is that I must have preached continually in all my pulpits and expounded and illustrated and enforced in all my lectureships, said Emmanuel, and that is, my new example and my new law of *motive*. My own motives always made me in all I said and did to be well-pleasing in My Father's eyes, and at any cost I must have preachers

and lecturers set up in Mansoul who shall assist Me in making Mansoul as well-pleasing in My Father's sight as I was Myself.

'For I am ware it is the seed of act  
God holds appraising in His hollow palm,  
Not act grown great thence as the world believes,  
Leafage and branchage vulgar eyes admire.'

Motives! gnashed Diabolus. And he tore his last card into a thousand shreds and cast the shreds under his feet in his rage and exasperation. Motives! New motives! Truly Thou art the threatened Seed of the woman! Truly Thou art the threatened Son of God!—Let all our preachers, then, preach much on motive to their people. The commonplace crowd of their people will not all like that preaching any more than Diabolus did; but their best people will all afterwards rise up in their salvation and bless them for it. On reformation also, let them every Sabbath preach, but only on the reformation that rises out of a reformed motive, and that again out of a reformed heart. And if a reformed motive, a reformed heart, and a reformed life are found both by preacher and hearer to be impossible; if all that only brings out the hopelessness of their salvation by reason of the guilt and the pollution and power of sin; then all that will only be to them that same ever deeper entering of the law into their hearts which led Paul to an ever deeper faith and trust in Jesus Christ. With a guilt, and a pollution, and a slavery to sin like ours, salvation from sin would be absolutely impossible. Absolutely impossible, that is, but for our Saviour, Jesus Christ. But with His

atoning blood and His Holy Spirit all things are possible—even our salvation.

Let us choose, then, a minister like Mr. John Menzies. Let us read the great books that make salvation difficult. Let us work out our own salvation, day and night, with fear and trembling, and when Wisdom is justified in her children, we shall be found justified among them. We shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity.

## XV

## MR. PRYWELL

'Search me, O God, and know my heart.'—*David*.

'Let a man examine himself.'—*Paul*.

'Look to yourselves.'—*John*.

'Know thyself.'—*Apollo*.



THE year 1668 saw the publication of one of the deepest books in the whole world, Dr. John Owen's *Remainders of Indwelling Sin in Believers*. The heart-searching depth; the clear, fearless, humbling truth; the intense spirituality, and the massive and masculine strength of John Owen's book have all combined to make it one of the acknowledged masterpieces of the great Puritan school. Had John Owen's style been at all equal to his great learning, to the depth and the grasp of his mind, and to the lofty holiness of his life, John Owen would have stood in the very foremost and selectest rank of apostolical and evangelical theologians. But in all his books Owen labours under the fatal drawback of a bad style. A fine style, a style like that of Hooker, or Taylor, or Bunyan, or Howe, or Leighton, or Law, is such a winning introduction to their works and such an abiding charm and spell. The full title of Dr. Owen's great work runs thus: *The Nature, Power, Deceit, and Prevalency of the Remainders of Indwelling Sin in Believers*—a title that

will tell all true students what awaits them when they have courage and enterprise enough to address themselves to this supreme and all-essential subject. Fourteen years after the publication of Dr. Owen's epoch-making book, John Bunyan's *Holy War* first saw the light. Equal in scriptural and in experimental depth, as also in their spiritual loftiness and intensity, those two books are as different as any two books, written in the same language, and written on the same subject, could by any possibility be. John Owen's book is the book of a great scholar who has read the Fathers and the Schoolmen and the Reformers till he knows them by heart, and till he has been able to digest all that is true to Scripture and to experience in them into his rich and ripe book. A powerful reasoner, a severe, bald, muscular writer, John Owen in all these respects stands at the very opposite pole to that of John Bunyan. The author of the *Holy War* had no learning, but he had a mind of immense natural sagacity, combined with a habit of close and deep observation of human life, and especially of religious life, and he had now a lifetime of most fruitful experience as a Christian man and as a Christian minister behind him; and, all that, taken up into Bunyan's splendid imagination, enabled him to produce this extraordinarily able and impressive book. A model of English style as the *Holy War* is, at the same time it does not attain at all to the rank of the *Pilgrim's Progress*; but then, to be second to the *Pilgrim's Progress* is reward and honour enough for any book. Let all genuine students, then, who would know the best that has

been written on experimental religion, and who would preach to the deepest and divinest experience of their best people, let them keep continually within their reach John Owen's *Temptation*, his *Mortification of Sin in Believers*, his *Nature and Power of Indwelling Sin*, and John Bunyan's *Holy War made for the Regaining of the Metropolis of this World*.

Well, then, as He who dwells on high would have it, there was one whose name was Mr. Prywell, a great lover of Mansoul. And he, as his manner was, did go listening up and down in Mansoul to see and hear, if at any time he might, whether there was any design against it or no. For he was always a jealous man, and feared some mischief would befall it, either from within or from some power without. Mr. Prywell was always a lover of Mansoul, a sober and a judicious man, a man that was no tattler, nor a raiser of false reports, but one that loves to look into the very bottom of matters, and talks nothing of news but by very solid arguments. And then, after our historian has told us some of the eminent services that Mr. Prywell was able to perform both for the King and for the city, he goes on to tell us how the captains determined that public thanks should be given by the town of Mansoul to Mr. Prywell for his so diligent seeking of the welfare of the town; and, further, that, forasmuch as he was so naturally inclined to seek their good, and also to undermine their foes, they gave him the commission of Scoutmaster-general for the good of Mansoul. And Mr. Prywell managed his charge and the trust that Mansoul had put into his hands with great conscience and good fidelity; for he

gave himself wholly up to his employ, and that not only within the town, but he also went outside of the town to pry, to see, and to hear. Now, that being so, it may interest and perhaps instruct you to-night to look for a little at some of the features and at some of the feats of the Scoutmaster-general of the Holy War, Mr. Prywell, of the town of Mansoul.

1. 'Well, now, as He who dwells on high would have it, there was one whose name was Mr. Prywell, a great lover of the town of Mansoul.' In other words: self-observation, self-examination, strict, jealous, sleepless self-examination, is of God. Our God who searches our hearts and tries our reins would have it so. And if He does not have it so in us, our souls are not as our God would have them to be. 'Bunyan employs *pry*,' says Miss Peacock in her excellent notes, 'in a more favourable sense than it now bears. As, for instance, it is said in another part of this same book that the men of Mansoul were allowed to *pry* into the words of the Holy Ghost and to expound them to their best advantage. Honest anxiety for the welfare of his fellow-townsmen was Mr. Prywell's chief characteristic. *Pry* is another form of *peer*—to look narrowly, to look closely.' And God, says John Bunyan, would have it so.

2. 'A great lover of Mansoul,' 'always a lover of Mansoul'; again and again that is testified concerning Mr. Prywell. It was not love for the work that led Mr. Prywell to give up his days and his nights as his history tells us he did. Mr. Prywell ran himself into many dangerous situations both within and without the city, and he lost himself far

more friends than he made by his devotion to his thankless task. But necessity was laid upon him. And what held him up was the sure and certain knowledge that his King would have that service at his hands. That, and his love for the city, for the safety and the deliverance of the city,—all that kept Mr. Prywell's heart fixed. Am I therefore your enemy? he would say to some who would have had it otherwise than the King would have it. But it is a good thing to be zealously affected in a work like mine, he would say, in self-defence and in self-encouragement. And then, though not many, there were always some in the city who said, Let him smite me and it shall be a kindness; let him reprove me and it shall be an excellent oil which shall not break my head. It was in Mansoul with Mr. Prywell as it was in Kidderminster with Richard Baxter, when some of his people said to one another, 'We will take all things well from one that we know doth entirely love us.' 'Love them,' said Augustine, 'and then say anything you like to them.' Now, that was Mr. Prywell's way. He loved Mansoul, and then he said many things to her that a false lover and a flatterer would never have dared to say.

3. Then, as the saying is, it goes without saying that 'Mr. Prywell was always a jealous man.' Great lovers are always jealous men, and Mr. Prywell showed himself to be a great lover by the great heat of his jealousy also. 'Vigilant,' says the excellent editress again; 'cautious against dishonour, reasonably mistrustful—low Latin *zelosus*, full of zeal. "And he said, I have been very jealous

for the Lord God of hosts.”’ Now, it so happened that some of Mr. Prywell’s most private and not at all professional papers—papers evidently, and on the face of them, connected with the state of the spy’s own soul—came into my hands as good lot would have it just the other night. The moth-eaten chest was full of his old papers, but the pieces that took my heart most were, as it looked to me, actually gnashed through with his remorseful teeth, and soaked and sodden past recognition with his sweat and his tears and his agonising hands. But after some late hours over those remnants I managed to make some sense to myself out of them. There are some parts of the parchments that pass me ; but, if only to show you that this arch-spy’s so vigilant jealousy was not all directed against other people’s bad hearts and bad habits, I shall copy some lines out of the old box. ‘Have I penitence?’ he begins without any preface. ‘Have I grief, shame, pain, horror, weariness for my sin? Do I pray and repent, if not seven times a day as David did, yet at least three times, as Daniel? If not as Solomon, at length, yet shortly as the publican? If not like Christ, the whole night, at least for one hour? If not on the ground and in ashes, at least not in my bed? If not in sackcloth, at least not in purple and fine linen? If not altogether freed from all, at least from immoderate desires? Do I give, if not as Zaccheus did, fourfold, as the law commands, with the fifth part added? If not as the rich, yet as the widow? If not the half, yet the thirtieth part? If not above my power, yet up to my power?’ And then over the page there are some

illegible pencillings from old authors of his such as this from Augustine: 'A good man would rather know his own infirmity than the foundations of the earth or the heights of the heavens.' And this from Cicero: 'There are many hiding-places and recesses in the mind.' And this from Seneca: 'You must know yourself before you can amend yourself. An unknown sin grows worse and worse and is deprived of cure.' And this from Cicero again: 'Cato exacted from himself an account of every day's business at night'; and also Pythagoras,

'Nor let sweet sleep upon thine eyes descend  
Till thou hast judged its deeds at each day's end.'

And this from Seneca again: 'When the light is removed out of sight, and my wife, who is by this time aware of my practice, is now silent, I pass the whole of my day under examination, and I review my deeds and my words. I hide nothing from myself: I pass over nothing.' And then in Mr. Prywell's boldest and least trembling hand: 'O yes! many shall come from the east and the west and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, when many of the children of the kingdom shall be cast out. O yes.' Now, this 'O yes!' Miss Peacock tells us, is the Anglicised form of a French word for our Lord's words, Take heed how ye hear!

4. 'A sober and a judicious man' it is said of Mr. Prywell also. To a certainty that. It could not be otherwise than that. For Mr. Prywell's office, its discoveries and its experiences, would sober any man. 'I am sprung from a country,' says Abelard,

‘of which the soil is light, and the temper of the inhabitants is light.’ So was it with Mr. Prywell to begin with. But even Abelard was sobered in time, and so was Mr. Prywell. Life sobered Abelard, and Mr. Prywell too; life’s crooks and life’s crosses, life’s duties and life’s disappointments, especially Mr. Prywell. ‘The more narrowly a man looks into himself,’ says À Kempis, ‘the more he sorroweth.’ Not sober-mindedness alone comes to him who looks narrowly into himself, but great sorrow of heart also. And if you are not both sobered in your mind and full of an unquenchable sorrow in your heart, O yes! attend to it, for you are not yet begun to be what God would have you to be. Dr. Newman, with all his mistakes and all his faults, was a master in two things: his own heart and the English language. And in writing home to his mother a confidential letter from college on his birthday, he confides to her that he often ‘shudders at himself.’ ‘No,’ he answered to his mother’s fears and advices about food and air and exercise: ‘No, I am neither nervous, nor in ill-health, nor do I study too much. I am neither melancholy, nor morose, nor austere, nor distant, nor reserved, nor sullen. I am always cheerful, ready and eager to join in any merriment. I am not clouded with sadness, nor absent in mind, nor deficient in action. No; take me when I am most foolish at home and extend mirth into childishness; yet all the time I am shuddering at myself.’ There spake the future author of the immortal sermons. There spake a mind and a heart that have deepened the minds and the hearts of Christian men more

than any other influence of the century ; a mind and a heart, moreover, that will shine and beat in our best literature and in our deepest devotion for centuries to come. You must all know by this time another classical passage from the pen of another spiritual genius in the Church of England, that greatly gifted church. Let me repeat it to illustrate how sober-mindedness and great sorrow or heart always come to the best of men. ‘Let any man consider that if the world knew all that of him which he knows of himself ; if they saw what vanity and what passions govern his inside, and what secret tempers sully and corrupt his best actions ; and he would have no more pretence to be honoured and admired for his goodness and wisdom than a rotten and distempered body is to be loved and admired for its beauty and comeliness. And, perhaps, there are very few people in the world who would not rather choose to die than to have all their secret follies, the errors of their judgments, the vanity of their minds, the falseness of their pretences, the frequency of their vain and disorderly passions, their uneasinesses, hatreds, envies, and vexations made known to the world. And shall pride be entertained in a heart thus conscious of its own miserable behaviour?’ No wonder that Mr. Prywell was sober-minded ! No wonder that Dr. Newman shuddered at himself ! And no wonder that William Law chose strangling and the pond rather than that any other man should see what went on in his heart !

5. And as if all that were not enough, and more than enough, to commend Mr. Prywell to us—to

our trust, to our confidence, and to our imitation—his royal certificate continues, ‘One that looks into the very bottom of matters, and talks nothing of news, but by very solid arguments.’ The very bottom of matters—that is, the very bottom of his own and other men’s hearts. Mr. Prywell counts nothing else worth a wise man’s looking at. Let fools and children look at the painted and deceitful surface of things, but let men, men of matters, and especially men of divine matters, look only at their own and other men’s hearts. The very bottom of all matters is there. All wars, all policies, all debates, all disputes, all good and all evil counsels, all the much weal and all the multitudinous woe of Mansoul—all have their bottom in the heart; in the heart of God, or in the heart of man, or in the heart of the devil. The heart is the root of absolutely every matter to Mr. Prywell. He would not waste one hour of any day, or one watch of any night, on anything else. And it was this that made him both the extraordinarily successful scout he was, and the extraordinarily sober and thoughtful and judicious man he was. O yes, my brethren, the bottom of matters, when you take to it, will work the same change in you. ‘Two things,’ says one who had long looked at his own matters with Mr. Prywell’s eyes—‘two things, O Lord, I recognise in myself: nature, which Thou hast made, and sin, which I have added.’ My brethren, that recognition, that discovery in yourselves, when it comes to you, will sober you as it has sobered so many men before you: when it comes to you, that is, about yourselves. That discovery made in your-

selves will make you deep-thinking men. It will make common men and unlearned men among you to be philosophers and theologians and saints. It will work in you a thoughtfulness, a seriousness, a depth, an awe, a holy fear, and a great desire that will already have made you new creatures. When, in examining yourselves and in characterising yourselves, you come on what some clear-eyed men have come on in themselves, and what one of them has described as 'the diabolical animus of the human mind'—when you make that discovery in yourselves, that will sober you, that will humble you and fill you full of remorse and compunction. And if in God's grace to you, that were to begin to be wrought in you this week, there would be one, at any rate, eating of that bread next Lord's day, and drinking of that cup as God would have it.

6. 'A man that is no tattler, nor raiser of false reports, and that talks nothing of news, but by very solid arguments.' Mr. Prywell was more taken up with his own matters at home, far more than the greatest busybodies are with other men's matters abroad. His name, I fear, will still sound somewhat ill in your ears, but I can assure you all the ill for you lies in the sound. Mr. Prywell would not hurt a hair of your head: the truth is, he does not know whether there is a hair on your head or no. This man's name comes to him and sticks to him, not because he pries into your affairs, for he does not, and never did, but because he is so drawn down into his own. Mr. Prywell has no eye for your windows and he has no ear for your doors. If your servant is a leaky slave, Prywell, of all your neigh-

bours, has no ear for his idle tales. This man is no eavesdropper ; your evil secrets have only a sobering and a saddening and a silencing effect upon him. Your house might be full of skeletons for anything he would ever discover or remember. The beam in his own eye is so big that he cannot see past it to speak about your small mote. 'The inward Christian,' says À Kempis, 'preferreth the care of himself before all other cares. He that diligently attendeth to himself can easily keep silence concerning other men. If thou attendest unto God and unto thyself, thou wilt be but little moved with what thou seest abroad.' At the same time, Mr. Prywell was no fool, and no coward, and no hoodwinked witness. He could tell his tale, when it was demanded of him, with such truth, and with such punctuality, and on such ample grounds, that a conviction of the truth instantly fell on all who heard him. 'Sirs,' said those who heard him break silence, 'it is not irrational for us to believe it,' with such solid arguments and with such an absence of mere suspicion and of all idle tales did he speak. On one occasion, on a mere 'inkling,' he woke up the guard ; only, it was so true an inkling that it saved the city. But I cannot follow Mr. Prywell any further to-night. How he went up and down Mansoul listening ; how he kept his eyes and his ears both shut and open ; what splendid services he performed in the progress, and specially toward the end, of the war ; how the thanks of the city were voted to him ; how he was made Scoutmaster-general for the good of the town of Mansoul, and the great conscience and good fidelity with which he managed

that great trust—all that you will read for yourselves under this marginal index, ‘The story of Mr. Prywell.’


Now, my brethren, as the outcome of all that, we must all examine ourselves as before God all this week. We must wait on His word and on His providences while they examine us all this week. We must pry well into ourselves all this week. Come, let us compel ourselves to do it. Let us search and try our ways all this week as we shall give an account. Let us ask ourselves how many Communion tables we have sat at, and at how many more we are likely to sit. Let us ask why it is that we have got so little good out of all our Communions. Let us ask who is to blame for that, and where the blame lies. Let us go to the bottom of matters with ourselves, and compel ourselves to say just what it is that is the cause of God’s controversy with us. What vow, what solemn promise, made when trouble was upon us, have we completely cast behind our back? What about secret prayer? At what times, for what things, and for what people do we in secret pray? What about secret sin? What is its name, and what does it deserve, and what fruit are we already reaping out of it? What is our besetting sin, and what steps do we take, as God knows, to crucify it? Do we love money too much? Do we love praise too much? Do we love eating and drinking too much? Does envy make our heart a very hell? Let us name the man we envy, and let us keep our Communion eye upon him. Let us mix his name with all the psalms and prayers and sermons of this Communion season. Or is it

diabolical ill-will ? Or is it a wicked tongue against an unsuspecting friend ? Let us examine ourselves as Paul did, as Prywell did, and as God would have us do it, and we shall discover things in ourselves so bad that if I were to put words on them to-night, you would stop your ears in horror and flee out of the church. Let a man see himself at least as others see him ; and then he will be led on from that to see himself as God sees him ; and then he will judge himself so severely as that he shall not need to be judged at the Judgment Day, and will condemn himself so sufficiently as that he shall not be condemned with a condemned world at the last.

## XVI

## YOUNG CAPTAIN SELF-DENIAL

‘If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me.’— *Our Lord*.

OW the siege was long, and many a fierce attempt did the enemy make upon the town, and many a shrewd brush did some of the townsmen meet with from the enemy, especially Captain Self-denial, to whose care both Ear-gate and Eye-gate had been intrusted. This Captain Self-denial was a young man, but stout, and a townsman in Mansoul. This young captain, therefore, being a hardy man, and a man of great courage to boot, and willing to venture himself for the good of the town, he would now and then sally out upon the enemy; but you must think this could not easily be done, but he must meet with some sharp brushes himself, and, indeed, he carried several of such marks on his face, yea, and some on some other parts of his body.’ Thus, Bunyan. I shall now go on to-night to offer you some annotations and some reflections on this short but excellent history of young Captain Self-denial.

1. Well, to begin with, this Captain Self-denial was still a young man. ‘And, now, it comes into my mind, said Goodman Gaius after supper, I will tell you a story well worth the hearing, as I think.

There were two men once upon a time that went on pilgrimage ; the one began when he was young and the other began when he was old. The young man had strong corruptions to grapple with, whereas the old man's corruptions were decayed with the decays of nature. The young man trod his steps as even as did the old one, and was every way as light as he ; who, now, or which of them, had their graces shining clearest, since both seemed to be alike ? Why, the young man's, doubtless, answered Mr. Honest. For that which heads against the greatest opposition gives best demonstration that it is strongest. A young man, therefore, has the advantage of the fairest discovery of a work of grace within him. And thus they sat talking till the break of day.'

Now, I have taken up Captain Self-denial to-night because the young men and I are to begin a study to-night to which I was first attracted because it taught me lessons about myself, and about self-denial, and thus about both a young man's and an old man's deepest and most persistent corruptions—lessons such as I have never been taught in any other school. In all my philosophical, theological, moral, and experimental reading, so to describe it, I have never met with any school of authors for one moment to be compared with the great evangelical mystics, especially when they treat of self, self-love, self-denial, the daily cross, and all suchlike lessons. Take the great doctrinal and experimental Puritans, such as John Owen, Thomas Goodwin, Richard Baxter, John Howe, and Jonathan Edwards, and add on to them the greatest and best mystics, such

as Jacob Behmen, Thomas à Kempis, Francis Fénelon, Jeremy Taylor, Samuel Rutherford, Robert Leighton, and William Law, and you will have the profoundest, the most complete, the most perfect, and, I will add, the most fascinating and enthralling of spiritual teaching in all the world. And I will be bold enough to promise you that if you will but join our Young Men's Class to-night, and will buy and read our mystical books, and will resolve to put in practice what you hear and read in the class, I will promise you, I say, that by the end of our short session you will not only be ten times more open and hospitably-minded men, but also ten times more spiritually-minded men, ten times more Christ-like men, and with your joy in Christ and His joy in you all but full.

2. The Captain Self-denial was a young man, and he was also a townsman in Mansoul. Young Self-denial and one other were all of Emmanuel's captains who were townsmen in Mansoul. All his other captains Emmanuel had brought with him; but the Captains Self-denial and Experience were both born and reared to their full manhood in that besieged city. 'A townsman.' How much there is for us all in that one word! How much instruction! How much encouragement! How much caution and correction! Our greatest grace; our most essential and indispensable grace; our most experimental and evidential grace; that grace, indeed, without which all our other graces are but specious shows and painted surfaces of graces; that grace into which our Lord here gathers up all our other graces;—that greatest of graces cannot be

imputed, imported, or introduced ; it must be born, bred, exercised, reared up to its full maturity, and sent forth to fight and to conquer, and all within the walls of its own native town ; in short, our self-denial must have its beginning and middle and end in our own heart. Antinomians there were, as our Puritan fathers nicknamed all those persons who glorified Christ by letting Him do all things for them, both His own things and their things too, both their justification and their sanctification too. And there are many good but ill-instructed men among ourselves who have just this taint of that old heresy cleaving to them still—this taint, namely, that they are tempted to carry over the suretyship and substitutionary work of Christ into such regions, and to carry it to such lengths in those regions, as, practically, to make Christ to minister to their soft and sinful living, and to their excuse and indulgence of themselves. I will put it squarely and plainly to some of my very best friends here to-night. Is it not the case, now, that you do not like this direction into which this text, and the truth of this text, are now travelling ? Is it not so that you shift back in your seat from the approaching cross ? Is it not the very and actual fact that you have secret ways of sin, secret habits of self-indulgence in your body and in your soul, in your mind and in your heart, secret sins that you mantle over with the robe of Christ's righteousness ? His spotless and imputed righteousness ? In your present temper you would have disliked deeply the Sermon on the Mount had you heard it ; and I see you shaking your head over your Sabbath-day dinner at this text when it was

first spoken. Lay this down for a law, all my brethren,—a New Testament and a never-to-be-abrogated law,—that the best and the safest religion for you is that way of religion that is hardest on your pride, on your self-importance, on your self-esteem, as well as on your purse and on your belly. You are not likely to err by practising too much of the cross. You may very well have too much of the cross of Christ preached to you, and too little of your own. Why! did not Christ die for me? you indignantly say. Yes; so He did. But only that you might die too. He was crucified, and so must you be crucified every day before one single drop of His sin-atonement blood shall ever be wasted on you. Be not deceived: the cross is not mocked; for only as a man nails himself, body and soul, to the cross every day shall he ever be saved from sin and death and hell by means of it. And, exactly as a man denies himself—no more and no less—his appetites, his passions, his thoughts and words and deeds, every day and every hour of every day, just so much shall He who searches our hearts and sees us in secret, acknowledge us, both every day now, and at the last day of all.

3. This same Captain Self-denial, his history goes on, was stout, he was an hardy man also, and a man of great courage. Stout and hardy and of great courage at home, that is; in his own mind and heart, soul and body, that is. Young Captain Self-denial was a perfect hero at saying No! and at saying No! to himself. It is a proverb that there is nothing so difficult as to say that monosyllable. And the proverb is Scripture truth if

you try to say No! to yourself. It takes the very stoutest of hearts, the most noble, the most manly, the most soldierly, and the most saintly of hearts to say No! to itself, and to keep on saying No! to itself to the bitter end of every trial and temptation and opportunity. I remember reading long ago a page or two of a medical man's diary. And in it he made a confession and an appeal I have never forgot; though, to my loss, I have not always acted upon it. He said that for many years he had never been entirely well. He had constant headaches and depressions, and it was seldom that he was not to some extent out of sorts. But, all the time, he had a shrewd guess within himself as to what was the matter with him. He felt ashamed to confess it even to himself that he over-ate himself every day at table; till, at last, summoning up all divine and human help, he determined that, however hungry he was, and however savoury the dish was, and however excellent the wine was, he would never either ask for or accept a second helping. And this was his testimony, that from that stout and hardy day he grew better in health daily; 'my head became clear, my eye bright, my complexion pure, my mind and feelings were redeemed from all clouds and depressions. And to-day I am a younger man at fifty than I was at thirty.' Now, if just saying No! to himself and to the waiter at table did work such a new birth in a confirmed gourmand of middle life, what would it not have wrought for him had he carried his answer stoutly and courageously through all the other parts of his body and soul?—as perhaps he did. Perhaps, having

tasted the sweet beginnings of salvation, he carried his short and sure regimen through. If he has done so, let him give us his full autobiography. What a blessed, what a priceless book it would be !

4. Stout Captain Self-denial was commanded to begin his life as an officer in Emmanuel's army by taking especial watch over Ear-gate and Eye-gate ; and at our last accounts of our abstemious doctor he had only got the length of Mouth-gate. But having begun so well with those three great out-posts of the soul, if those two trusty officers only held on, and played the man courageously enough, they would soon be promoted to still more important, still more central, and, if more difficult and dangerous, then also much more honourable and remunerative posts. Appetite, deep and deadly as its evils are, is, after all, only an outwork of the soul ; and the same sharp knife that the epicure and the sot in all their stages must put to their throat, that same knife must be made to draw blood in all parts of their mind and their heart, in their will and in their imagination, till a perfect chorus of self-denials rings like noblest martial music through all the gates, and streets, and fortresses, and strongholds, and very palaces and temples of the soul. I shall here stand aside and let the greatest of the English mystics speak to you on this present point. 'When we speak of self-denial,' he says, in his *Christian Perfection*, 'we are apt to confine it to eating and drinking : but we ought to consider that, though a strict temperance be necessary in these things, yet that these are the easiest and the smallest instances of self-denial.

Pride, vanity, self-love, covetousness, envy, and other inclinations of the like nature call for a more constant and a more watchful self-denial than the appetites of hunger and thirst. And till we enter into this course of universal self-denial we shall make no progress in real piety, but our lives will be a ridiculous mixture of I know not what; sober and covetous, proud and devout, temperate and vain, regular in our forms of devotion and irregular in all our passions, circumspect in little modes of behaviour and careless and negligent of tempers the most essential to piety. And thus it will necessarily be with us till we lay the axe to the root of the tree, till we deny and renounce the whole corruption of our nature, and resign ourselves up entirely to the Spirit of God, to think and speak and act by the wisdom and the purity of religion.'

5. Stout as Captain Self-denial was, and notable alarms and some brisk execution as he did upon the enemy, yet he must meet with some brushes himself; indeed, he carried several of the marks of such brushes on his face as well as on some other parts of his body. If I had read in his history that Young Captain Self-denial had left his mark upon his enemies, I would have said, Well done, and I would have added that I always expected as much. But it is far more to my purpose to read that he had not always got himself off without wounds that left lasting scars both where they were seen of all, and where they were seen and felt only by Self-denial himself. And not Self-denial only, but even Paul, in our flesh, and with like passions with us, had the same experience and has left us the same record.

I keep my body under' : so our emasculated English version makes us read it. But the visual image in the masterly original Greek is not so mealy-mouthed. I box and buffet myself day and night, says Paul. I play the truculent tyrant over a lewd and lazy slave. I hit myself blinding blows on my tenderest part. I am ashamed to look at myself in the glass, for all under my eyes I am black and blue. If David, after the matter of Uriah, had done that to himself, and even more than that, we would not have wondered; we would have expected it, and we would have said, It is no more than we would have done ourselves. But that a spotless, gentle, noble soul like Paul should so have mangled himself, —that quite dumfounds us. If Paul, then, who, touching the righteousness which is in the law, was blameless, had to handle himself in that manner in order to keep himself blameless, shall any young man here hope to escape temptation without such blows at himself as shall leave their mark on him all his days? Nay, not only so, but after Self-denial had thus exercised himself and subdued himself, still his enemy sometimes got such an advantage over him as left him as his history here describes him. All which is surely full of the most excellent heartening to all who read, in earnest and for an example, his fine history.

6. The last and crowning exploit of our matchless captain was to capture, and execute, and quarter, and hang up on a gallows at the market-cross, the head and the hands and the feet of his oldest, most sworn, and most deadly enemy, one Self-love. So stout and so insufferable was our captain in the

matter of Self-love that when it was proposed by some of his many influential friends and high-in-place relations in the city that the judgment of the court-martial on Self-love should be deferred, our stout soldier with the cuts on his face and in some other parts of his body stood up, and said that the city and the army must make up their mind either to relieve him of his sword, hacked and broken off as it was, or else to execute the law upon Self-love on the spot. I will lay down my commission this very day, he said, with an extraordinary indignation. Many rich men in the city, and many men deep in the King's service, muttered mutinous things when their near relative was hurried to the open causeway, but by that time the soldiers of Self-denial's company had brained Self-love with the butts of their muskets. And it was the stand that our captain made in the matter of Self-love that at last lifted the young soldier where many had felt he should have been lifted long ago. From that day he was made a lord, a military peer, and an adviser of the crown and the crown officers in all the deepest counsels concerning Mansoul. Only, with the cloak and the coronet of Self-denial the present history all but comes to an end. For, before the outcast remains of Self-love had mouldered to their dust on the city gate, the King's chariot had descended into the street, had ascended up to the palace at the head of the street, and a new age of the city life had begun, the full history of which has yet to be told.

Remain behind, then, and begin with us to-night, all you young men. You cannot begin this life-

long study and this lifelong pursuit of self-denial too early. For, even if you begin to read our books and to practise our discipline in your very boyhood, when you are old men and very saints of God you will feel that your self-love is still so full of life and power, that your self-denial has scarcely begun. Ah, me! men: both old and young men. Ah, me! what a life's task set us of God it is to make us a new heart, to cleanse out an unclean heart, to lay in the dust a proud heart, and to keep a heart at all times, and in all places, and toward all people, with all diligence! Who is sufficient for these things?

‘Now was Christian somewhat in a maze. But at last, when every man started back for fear, Christian saw a man of a very stout countenance come up to him that sat there with the inkhorn to write, saying, Set down my name, sir! At which there was a pleasant voice heard from those that were within, even of those who walked upon the top of that place, saying,


“Come in, come in :  
Eternal glory thou shalt win.”

Then Christian smiled, and said: I think, verily, that I know the meaning of all this now.’

## XVII

## FIVE PICKT MEN

‘I took wise men and known and made them captains.’—*Moses*.

 OHN BUNYAN never lost his early love for a soldier's life any more than he ever forgot the rare delights of his bell-ringing days. John Bunyan, all his days, never saw a bell-rope that his fingers did not tingle, and he never saw a soldier in uniform without instinctively shouldering his youthful musket. Bunyan was one of those rare men who are of imagination all compact; and consequently it is that all his books are full of the scenes, the occupations, and the experiences of his early days. Not that he says very much, in as many words, about what happened to him in the days when he was a soldier; it is only once in all his many books that he says that when he was a soldier such and such a thing happened to him. At the same time, all his books bear the impress of his early days upon them; and as for this special book of Bunyan's now open before us, it is full from board to board of the strife and the din of his early battles. The *Holy War* is just John Bunyan's soldierly life spiritualised—spiritualised and so worked up into this fine English Classic.

Well, then, after Mansoul was taken and reduced,

the victorious Prince determined so to occupy the town with His soldiers that it should never again either be taken by force from without, or ever again revolt by weakness or by fear from within. And with this view He chose out five of His best captains—My five pickt men, He always called them—and placed those five captains and their thousands under them in the strongholds of the town. On the margin of this page our versatile author speaks of that step of Emmanuel's in the language of a philosopher, a moralist, and a divine. 'Five graces,' he says, 'pickt out of an abundance of common virtues.' This summing-up sentence stands on his stiff and dry margin. But in the rich and living flow of the text itself our author goes on writing like the man of genius he is. With all the warmth and colour and dramatic movement of which this whole book is full, this great writer goes on to set those five choice captains of our salvation before us in a way that we shall never forget.

1. 'The first was that famous captain, the noble Captain Credence. His were the red colours, and Mr. Promise bare them. And for a scutcheon he had the Holy Lamb and the golden shield; and he had ten thousand men at his feet.' Now, this same Captain Credence from first to last of the war always led the van both within and around Mansoul. In ordinary and peaceful days; in days of truce and parley; when the opposite armies were laid up in their winter quarters, or were, for any cause, drawn off from one another, some of the other captains might be more in evidence. But in every exploit to be called an exploit; in every single enter-

prise of danger; when any new position was to be taken up, or any forlorn hope was to be led, there, in the very van of labour and of danger, was sure to be seen Captain Credence with his blood-red colours in his own hand. You understand your Bunyan by this time, my brethren? Captain Credence, your little boy at school will tell you, is just the soldier-like faith of your sanctification. *Credo*, he will tell you, is 'I believe'; it is to have faith in God and in the word of God. You will borrow your Latin from your little boy, and then you will pay him back by telling him how Captain Credence has always led the van in your soul. You will tell him and show him what a wonderful writer on the things of the soul John Bunyan is, till you make John Bunyan one of your son's choicest authors for all his days. You will do this if you will tell him how and when this same Captain Credence with his crimson colours first led the van in your salvation. You will tell him this with more and more depth and more and more plainness as year after year he reads his *Holy War*, and better and better understands it, till he has had it all fulfilled in himself as a pickt captain and good soldier of Jesus Christ. You will tell him about yourself, till, at this forlorn hope in his own life, and at that sounded advance, in some new providence and in some new duty; in this commanded attack on an inwardly entrenched enemy, and in that resolute assault on some battlement of evil habit, he recollects his noble, confiding, and loving father and plays the man again, and that all the more if only for his father's sake. Ask your son what he knows and what you do not know, and

then as long as his heart and his ear are open tell him what you know and what you have by faith come through, and that will be a priceless possession to him, especially when he is put in possession of it by you.

Well on toward the end of the war, the Captain Credence had so acquitted himself that he was summoned one day to the Prince's quarters, when the following colloquy ensued: 'What hath my Lord to say to His servant?' And then, after a sign or two of favour, it was said to him: 'I have made thee lieutenant over all the forces in Mansoul; so that, from this day forward, all men in Mansoul shall be at thy word; and thou shalt be he that shall lead in and that shall lead out Mansoul. And at thy command shall all the rest of the captains be.' My brethren, you will have the whole key to all that in yourselves if this same war has gone this length in you. Faith, your faith in God, and in the word of God, will, as this inward war goes on, not only lead the van in your heart and in your life, but just because your faith so leads in all things, and is so fitted to lead in all things, it will at last be lifted up and set over your soul, and all the things of your soul, till nothing shall be done in any of the streets, or gates, or walls thereof that faith in God and in His word does not first allow and admit. And then, when it has come to that within you, that is the best mind, that is the safest, the happiest, and the most heavenly mind that you can attain to in this present life; and when faith shall thus lead and rule over all things in thy soul, be thou always ready, for thy speedy translation to a still better life is just at the door.

2. 'The second was that famous captain, Good-hope. His were the blue colours. His standard-bearer was Mr. Expectation, and for a scutcheon he had three golden anchors ; and he had ten thousand men at his feet.' The time was, my brethren, when all your hopes and mine were as yet anchored without the veil. But all that is now changed. We still hope, in a mild kind of way, for this thing and for that in this present life ; but only in a mild kind of way. It would not be right in us not to look forward, say, from spring-time to summer, and from summer to harvest. If the husbandman had not hope in the former and in the latter rain he would not sow ; and as it is with the husbandman so it is with us all : so ought it to be, and so it must be. But we say God willing ! all the time that we plot and plan and hope. And we say God willing ! no longer with a sigh, but, now, always with a smile. In His will is our tranquillity, we say, and we know that if it is not His will that this and that slightly anchored hope should be fulfilled, then that only means that all our hopes, to be called hopes, are soon to be realised. Our green and salad days in the matter of hope are for ever past. If we had it all absolutely secured to us that this world is still promising to its salad dupes, it would not come within a thousand miles of satisfying our hearts. Whether the hopes of our hearts are to be fulfilled within the veil or no, that remains to be seen ; but all the things without the veil taken together do not any longer even pretend to promise a hope to hearts like ours. Our Forerunner has carried away our hearts with Him. We have no heart left for any one

but Him, or for anything without or within the veil that He is not and is not in. And till that hope also has made us ashamed,—till He and His promises have failed us like all the rest,—we are going to anchor our hearts on that, and on that only, which we believe is with Him within the veil. If our Forerunner also disappoints us; if we enter where He is, only to find that He is not there; or that, though there, He is not able to satisfy our hope in Him, and make us like Himself, then we shall be of all men the most miserable. But not till then. No; not till then. And thus it is that Captain Good-hope has his billet in our heart; thus it is that his blue colours float over our house; and thus it is that his three golden anchors are blazing out in all their beauty on the best wall of our earthly house.

3. ‘The third was that valiant captain, the Captain Charity. His standard-bearer was Mr. Pitiful, and for his scutcheon he had three naked orphans embraced in his bosom; and he also had ten thousand men at his feet.’ O Charity! O valiant and pitiful Charity! Divine-natured and heavenly-minded Charity! When wilt thou come and dwell in my heart? When, by thine indwelling, shall I be able to love my neighbour, and all my neighbours, as myself? When, in thy strength, shall I cease from repining at my neighbour’s good; and when shall I cease secretly rejoicing over his evil? When shall I, by thee renewing me, be made able to cease in everything from seeking first my own will and my own way; my own praise and my own glory? When shall it be as much my new nature to love

my neighbour as it is now my old nature to hate him? When shall I cease to be so soon angry, and hard, and bitter, and scornful, and unrelenting, and unforgiving? When shall my neighbour's presence, his image, and his name always call up only love and honour, good-will and affectionate delight? When and where shall I, under thee, feel for the last time any evil of any kind in my heart against my brother? Oh! to see the day when I shall suffer long and be kind! When I shall never again vaunt myself or be puffed up! When I shall bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, endure all things! O blessed, blessed Charity! with thy divine heart, with thy dove-like eyes, and with thy bosom full of pity, when wilt thou come into my sinful heart and bring all heaven in with thee! O Charity! till thou so comest I shall wait for thee. And, till thou comest, thy standard-bearer shall be my door porter, and thy scutcheon shall hang night and day at my door-post!

4. 'The fourth captain was that gallant commander, the Captain Innocent. His standard-bearer was Mr. Harmless; his were the white colours, and for his scutcheon he had three golden doves.' My brethren, how well it would have been with us to-day if we had always lived innocently! Had we only been innocent of that man's, and that man's, and that man's, and that man's hurt! (Let us name all the men to ourselves.) How many men have we, first and last, hurt! Some intentionally, and some unintentionally; some deliberately, and some only by accident; some of malice, and some only of misfortune; some innocently and

unknowingly, and whom we never properly hurt. Some, also, by our mere existence ; some by our best actions ; some because we have helped and not hurt others ; and some out of nothing else but the pure original devilry of their own evil hearts. And then, when we take all these men home to our hearts, what hearts all these men give us ! Who, then, is the man here who has done to other men the most hurt ? Who has caused or been the occasion of most hurt ? Let that so unhappy man just think that the gallant commander, the Captain Innocent himself, with his white colours and with his golden doves, is standing and knocking at your evil door. O unhappy man ! By all the hurt and harm you have ever done—by all that you can never now undo—by those spotless colours that are still snow and not yet scarlet as they wave over you—by those three golden doves that are an emblem of the life that still lies open before you, as well as an invitation to you to enter on that life—why will you die of remorse and despair ? Open the door of your heart and admit Captain Innocent. He knows that of all hurtful men on the face of the earth you are the most hurtful, but he is not on that account afraid at you ; indeed, it is on that account that he has come so near to you. By admitting him, by enlisting under him, by serving under him, some of the most hurtful and injurious men that ever lived have lived after to be the most innocent and the most harmless of men, with their hands washed every day in innocency, and with three golden doves as the scutcheon of their new nature and their Christian character. Oh come into

my heart, Captain Innocent; there is room in my heart for thee!

5. 'And then the fifth was that truly royal and well-beloved captain, the Captain Patience. His standard-bearer was Mr. Suffer-long, and for a scutcheon he had three arrows through a golden heart.' Three arrows through a golden heart! Most eloquent, most impressive, and most instructive of emblems! First, a heart of gold, and then that heart of gold pierced, and pierced, and then pierced again with arrow after arrow. Patience was the last of Emmanuel's pickt graces. Captain Patience with his pierced heart always brought up the rear when the army marched. But when Captain Patience and Mr. Suffer-long did enter and take up their quarters in any house in Mansoul,—then was there no house more safe, more protected, more peaceful, more quietly, sweetly, divinely happy than just that house where this loyal and well-beloved captain bore in his heart. Entertain patience, my brethren. Practise patience, my brethren. Make your house at home a daily school to you in which to learn patience. Be sure that you well understand the times, the occasions, the opportunities, and the invitations of patience, and take profit out of them; and thus both your profit and that of others also will be great. Tribulation worketh patience. Endure tribulation, then, for the sake of its so excellent work. Nothing worketh patience like tribulation, and therefore it is that tribulation so abounds in the lives of God's people. So much does tribulation abound in the lives of God's people that they are actually known in

heaven and described there by their experience of tribulation. 'These are they which came out of great tribulation, and therefore are they before the throne.' These are they with the three sharp arrows shot through and through their hearts of gold.

## XVIII

## MR. DESIRES-AWAKE

'One thing have I desired.'—*David*.

**M**R. DESIRES-AWAKE dwelt in a very mean cottage in Mansoul. There were two very mean cottages in Mansoul, and those two cottages stood beside one another and leaned upon one another and held one another up. Mr. Desires-awake dwelt in the one of those cottages and Mr. Wet-eyes in the other. And those two mendicant men were wont to meet together for secret prayer, when Mr. Desires-awake would put a rope upon his head, while Mr. Wet-eyes would not be able to speak for wringing his hands in tears all the time. Many a time did those two meanest and most despised of men deliver that city, according to the proverb of the Preacher: Wisdom is better than strength, and the words of wisdom are to be heard in secret places, where wisdom is far better than weapons of war. Why should I not do all for them and the best I can? said Mr. Desires-awake when the men of Mansoul came to him in their extremity. I will even venture my life again for them at the pavilion of the Prince. And accordingly this mean man put his rope upon his head, as was his wont, and went out to the

Prince's tent and asked the reformades if he might see their Master. Then the Prince, coming to the place where the petitioner lay on the ground, demanded what his name was and of what esteem he was in Mansoul, and why he, of all the multitudes of Mansoul, was sent out to His Royal tent on such an errand. Then said the man to the Prince standing over him, he said: Oh let not my Lord be angry; and why inquirest Thou after the name of such a dead dog as I am? Pass by, I pray Thee, and take not notice of who I am, because there is, as Thou very well knowest, so great a disproportion between Thee and me. For my part, I am out of charity with myself; who, then, should be in love with me? Yet live I would, and so would I that my townsmen should; and because both they and myself are guilty of great transgressions, therefore they have sent me, and I have come in their names to beg of my Lord for mercy. Let it please Thee, therefore, to incline to mercy; but ask not who Thy servant is. All this, and how Mr. Desires-awake and Mr. Wet-eyes sped in their petition, is to be read at length in the Holy History. And now let us take down the key that hangs in our author's window and go to work with it on the sweet mystery of Mr. Desires-awake.

1. Well, then, to begin with, this poor man's name need not delay us long seeking it out. In shorter time, and with surer success than I could give you the dictionary root of his name, if you will look within you will all see the visual image of this poor man's name in your own heart. For our hearts are all as full as they can hold of all kinds

of desires ; some good and some bad, some asleep and some awake, some alive and some dead, some raging like a hundred hungry lions, and some satisfied as a sleeping child. Well, then, this mean man was called Mr. Desires-awake, and what his desires were awake after and set upon we have already seen in his head-dress and heard in his prayer. His house, on the other hand, will not be so well known. For it was less a house than a hut—a hut hidden away out of sight and back behind Mr. Wet-eyes' hut. Mr. Desires-awake's cottage was so mean and meagre that no one ever came to visit him unless it was his next-door neighbour. They never left their cottages, those two poor men, unless it was to see one another ; or, strange to tell, unless it was to go out at the city gate to see and to speak with their Prince. And at such times their venturesomeness both astonished themselves and amused their Prince. Sometimes he laughed to see them back at his door again ; but more often he wept to see and hear them ; all which made the guards of his pavilion to wonder who those two strange men might be. And thus it was that if at any long interval of time any of the men of the city desired to see Mr. Desires-awake, he was sure to be found at the pavilion door of his Prince, or else in his neighbour's cottage, or else at home in his own. From year's end to year's end you might look in vain for either of those two poor men in the public resorts of Mansoul. When all the town was abroad on holidays and fair-days and feast-days, those two mean men were then closest at home. And when the booths of the town were full of all

kinds of wares and merchandise, and all the greens in the town were full of games, and plays, and cheats, and fools, and apes, and knaves, only those two penniless men would abide shut up at home. At home; or else together they would go to a market-stance set up by their Prince outside the walls where one was stationed to stand and to cry: 'Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Incline your ear and come to me; hear, and your soul shall live.' And sometimes the Prince would go out in person to meet the two men with nothing to pay, and would Himself say to them, I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, and white raiment, and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, till the two men, Mr. Desires-awake and Mr. Wet-eyes, would go home to their huts laden with their Prince's free gifts and royal bounties.

2. But, with all that, Mr. Desires-awake never went out to his Prince's pavilion till he had again put his rope upon his head. And, however laden with royal presents he ever returned to his mean cottage, he never laid aside his rope. He ate in his rope, he slept in his rope, he visited his next-door neighbour in his rope, till the only instruction he left behind him was to bury him in a ditch, and be sure to put his rope upon his head. The men and the boys of the town jeered at Mr. Desires-awake as he passed up their streets in his rope, and the very mothers in Mansoul taught their children in arms to run after him and to cry, Go up, thou

roped head! Go up, thou roped head! We be free men, the men of the town called after him; and we never were in bondage to any man. Out with him; out with him! He is beside himself. Much repentance hath made him mad! But through all that Mr. Desires-awake was as one that heard them not. For Mr. Desires-awake was full of louder voices within. The voices within his bosom quite drowned the babel around him. The voices within called him far worse names than the streets of the city ever called him; till all he could do was to draw his rope down upon his head and press on again to the Prince's pavilion. You understand about that rope, my brethren, do you not? Mr. Desires-awake's continual rope? In old days when a guilty man came of his own accord to the judge to confess himself deserving of death, he would put a rope upon his head. And that rope as much as said to the judge and to all men—the miserable man as good as said: This is my desert. This is the wages of my sin. I justify my judge. I judge myself. I hereby do myself to death. And it was this that so angered the happy holiday-makers of Mansoul. For they forgave themselves. They justified themselves. They put a high price upon themselves. Humiliation and sorrow for sin was not in all their thoughts; and they hated and hunted back into his hut the humble man whose gait and garb always reminded them of their past life and of their latter end. But for all they could do, Mr. Desires-awake would wear his rope. My soul chooseth strangling rather than sin, he would say. My sin hath found me out, he would say;

I hate myself, he would say, because of my sin. I condemn and denounce myself. I hang myself up with this rope on the accursed tree. And thus it was that while other men were crucifying their Prince afresh, Mr. Desires-awake was crucifying himself with and after his Prince. And thus it was that while the men and the women of the town so hated and so mocked Mr. Desires-awake, his Prince so loved and so honoured him.

3. 'Oh let not my Lord be angry; and why inquirest Thou after the name of such a dead dog as I am?' said Desires-awake to his Prince. 'Behold, now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord which am but dust and ashes,' said Abraham. 'If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean, yet shalt thou plunge me into the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me,' said Job. 'My wounds stink and are corrupt; my loins are filled with a loathsome disease, and there is no soundness in my flesh,' said David. 'But we are all as an unclean thing,' said Isaiah, 'and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.' 'I am the chief of sinners,' said the apostle. 'Hold your peace; I am a devil and not a man,' said Philip Neri to his sons. 'I am a sinner, and worse than the chief of sinners, yea, a guilty devil,' said Samuel Rutherford. 'I hated the light; I was a chief—the chief of sinners,' said Oliver Cromwell. 'I was more loathsome in my own eyes than a toad,' said John Bunyan. 'Sin and corruption would as naturally bubble out of my heart as water would bubble out of a fountain. I could have changed hearts with anybody. I thought none but the devil himself

could equalise me for wickedness and pollution of mind.' 'Despise me not,' said Bishop Andrewes, 'an unclean worm, a dead dog, a putrid corpse. The just falleth seven times a day; and I, an exceeding sinner, seventy times seven. Me, O Lord, of sinners chief, chiefest, and greatest.' And William Law, 'An unclean worm, a dead dog, a stinking carcass. Drive, I beseech Thee, the serpent and the beast out of me. O Lord, I detest and abhor myself for all these my sins, and for all my abuse of Thine infinite mercy.' From all this, then, you will see that this dead dog of ours with the rope upon his head was no strange sight at Emmanuel's pavilion. And you and I shall still be in the same saintly succession if we go continually with his words in our mouth, and with his instrument in our hands and on our heads.

4. 'The Prince to whom I went,' said Mr. Desires-awake, 'is such a one for beauty and for glory that whoso sees Him must ever after both love and fear Him. I, for my part,' he said, 'can do no less; but I know not what the end will be of all these things.' What made Mr. Desires-awake say that last thing was that when he was prostrate in his prayer the Prince turned His head away, as if He was out of humour and out of patience with His petitioner; while, all the time, the overcome Prince was weeping with love and with pity for Desires-awake. Only that poor man did not see that, and would not have believed that even if he had seen it. I cannot tell what the end will be, said Desires-awake; but one thing I know, I shall never be able to cease from both loving and fearing that

Prince. I shall always love Him for His beauty and fear Him for His glory. Can you say anything like that, my brethren? Have you been at His seat with sackcloth, and a rope, and ashes, and tears, and prayers, like Abraham, and David, and Isaiah, and Paul, and John Bunyan, and Bishop Andrewes? And, whatever may be the end, do you say that henceforth and for ever you must both love and fear that Prince? ‘Though He slay me,’ said Job, ‘yet I shall both love and trust Him.’ Well, the Prince is the Prince, and He will take both His own time and His own way of taking off your rope and putting a chain of gold round your neck, and a new song in your mouth, as He did to Job. There may be more weeping yet, both on your side and on His before He does that; but He will do it, and He will not delay an hour that He can help in doing it. Only, do you continue and increase to love His beauty, and to fear His glory. And that of itself will be reward and blessing enough to you. Nay, once you have seen both His beauty and His glory, then to lie a dog under His table, and to beg at His door with a rope on your head to all eternity would be a glorious eternity to you. Samuel Rutherford said that to see Christ through the keyhole once in a thousand years would be heaven enough for him. Christ wept in heaven as Rutherford wrote that letter in Aberdeen, and if you make Him weep in the same way He will soon make you to laugh too. He will soon make you to laugh as Samuel Rutherford and Mr. Desires-awake are laughing now. Only, my brethren, answer this—Are your desires

awakened indeed after Jesus Christ? You know what a desire is. Your hearts are full to the brim of desires. Well, is there one desire in a day in your heart for Christ? In the multitude of your desires within you, what share and what proportion go out and up to Christ? You know what beauty is. You know and you love the beauty of a child, of a woman, of a man, of nature, of art, and so on. Do you know, have you ever seen, the ineffable beauty of Christ? Is there one saint of God here,—and He has many saints here—is there one of you who can say with David in the text, *One thing do I desire?* There should be many so desiring saints here; for Christ's beauty is far better and far fairer, far more captivating, far more enthralling, and far more satisfying to us than it could be to David. Shall we call you *Desires-awake*, then, after this? Can you say—do you say, *One thing do I desire*, and that is no thing and no person, no created beauty and no earthly sweetness, but my one desire is for God: to be His, and to be like Him, and to be for ever with Him? Then, it shall soon all be. For, what you truly desire,—all that you already are; and what you already are,—all that you shall soon completely and for ever be. Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

‘As for me,’ says the great-hearted, the hungry-hearted Psalmist, ‘I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness.’ One would have said that David had all that heart could desire even

before he fell asleep. For he had a throne, the throne of Israel, and a son, a son like Solomon to sit upon it. A long life also, full to the brim of all kinds of temporal and spiritual blessings. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits ; who forgiveth all thine iniquities ; who healeth all thy diseases ; who redeemeth thy life from destruction ; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies ; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things, so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's. All that, and yet not satisfied ! O David ! David ! surely Desires-awake is thy new name ! One of our own poets has said :—

‘ All thoughts, all passions, all delights,  
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,  
All are but ministers of Love,  
And feed His sacred flame.’

Now, if that is true, as it is true, even of earthly and ephemeral love, how much more true is it of the love that is in the immortal soul of man for the everlasting God ? And what a blessed life that already is when all things that come to us—joy and sorrow, good and evil, nature and grace, all thoughts, all passions, all delights—are all but so many ministers to our soul's desire after God, after the Divine Likeness and for the Beatific Vision.

‘ Oh ! Christ, He is the Fountain,  
The deep sweet Well of Love !  
The streams on earth I've tasted,  
More deep I'll drink above ;  
There, to an ocean fulness,  
His mercy doth expand ;  
And glory—glory dwelleth  
In Emmanuel's land.’

## XIX

## MR. WET-EYES

‘Oh that my head were waters!’—*Jeremiah*.

‘Tears gain everything.’—*Teresa*.



NOW Mr. Desires-awake, when he saw that he must go on this errand, besought that they would grant that Mr. Wet-eyes might go with him. Now this Mr. Wet-eyes was a near neighbour of Mr. Desires-awake, a poor man, and a man of a broken spirit, yet one that could speak well to a petition; so they granted that he should go with him. Wherefore the two men at once addressed themselves to their serious business. Mr. Desires-awake put his rope upon his head, and Mr. Wet-eyes went with his hands wringing together. Then said the Prince, And what is he that is become thy companion in this so weighty a matter? So Mr. Desires-awake told Emmanuel that this was a poor neighbour of his, and one of his most intimate associates. And his name, said he, may it please your most excellent Majesty, is Wet-eyes, of the town of Mansoul. I know that there are many of that name that are naught, said he; but I hope it will be no offence to my Lord that I have brought my poor neighbour with me. Then Mr. Wet-eyes fell on his face to the ground, and made this apology for his coming with his neighbour to his Lord:—

‘Oh, my Lord,’ quoth he, ‘what I am I know not myself, nor whether my name be feigned or true, especially when I begin to think what some have said, and that is that this name was given me because Mr. Repentance was my father. But good men have sometimes bad children, and the sincere do sometimes beget hypocrites. My mother also called me by this name of mine from my cradle; but whether she said so because of the moistness of my brain, or because of the softness of my heart, I cannot tell. I see dirt in mine own tears, and filthiness in the bottom of my prayers. But I pray Thee (and all this while the gentleman wept) that Thou wouldst not remember against us our transgressions, nor take offence at the unqualifiedness of Thy servants, but mercifully pass by the sin of Mansoul, and refrain from the magnifying of Thy grace no longer.’ So at His bidding they arose, and both stood trembling before Him.

1. ‘His name, may it please your Majesty, is Wet-eyes, of the town of Mansoul. I know, at the same time, that there are many of that name that are naught.’ Naught, that is, for this great enterprise now in hand. And thus it was that Mr. Desires-awake in setting out for the Prince’s pavilion besought that Mr. Wet-eyes might go with him. Mr. Desires-awake felt keenly how much might turn on who his companion was that day, and therefore he took Mr. Wet-eyes with him. David would have made a most excellent associate for Mr. Desires-awake that day. ‘I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.’ And

again, 'Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not Thy law.' This, then, was the only manner of man that Mr. Desires-awake would stake his life alongside of that day. 'I have seen some persons weep for the loss of sixpence,' said Mr. Desires-awake, 'or for the breaking of a glass, or at some trifling accident. And they cannot pretend to have their tears valued at a bigger rate than they will confess their passion to be when they weep. Some are vexed for the dirtying of their linen, or some such trifle, for which the least passion is too big an expense. And thus it is that a man cannot tell his own heart simply by his tears, or the truth of his repentance by those short gusts of sorrow.' Well, then, my brethren, tell me, Do you think that Mr. Desires-awake would have taken you that day to the pavilion door? Would his head have been safe with you for his associate? Your associates see many gusts in your heart. Do they ever see your eyes red because of your sin? Did you ever weep so much as one good tear-drop for pure sin? One true tear: not because your sins have found you out, but for secret sins that you know can never find you out in this world? And, still better, do you ever weep in secret places not for sin, but for sinfulness—which is a very different matter? Do you ever weep to yourself and to God alone over your incurably wicked heart? If not, then weep for that with all your might, night and day. No mortal man has so much cause to weep as you have. Go to God on the spot, on every spot, and say with Bishop Andrewes, who is both Mr. Desires-awake and Mr. Wet-eyes in one, say with

that deep man in his *Private Devotions*, say: ‘I need more grief, O God; I plainly need it. I can sin much, but I cannot correspondingly repent. O Lord, give me a molten heart. Give me tears; give me a fountain of tears. Give me the grace of tears. Drop down, ye heavens, and bedew the dryness of my heart. Give me, O Lord, this saving grace. No grace of all the graces were more welcome to me. If I may not water my couch with my tears, nor wash Thy feet with my tears, at least give me one or two little tears that Thou mayest put into Thy bottle and write in Thy book!’ If your heart is hard, and your eyes dry, make something like that your continual prayer.

2. ‘A poor-man,’ said Mr. Desires-awake, about his associate. ‘Mr. Wet-eyes is a poor man, and a man of a broken spirit.’ ‘Let Oliver take comfort in his dark sorrows and melancholies. The quantity of sorrow he has, does it not mean withal the quantity of sympathy he has, and the quantity of faculty and of victory he shall yet have? Our sorrow is the inverted image of our nobleness. The depth of our despair measures what capability and height of claim we have to hope. Black smoke, as of Tophet, filling all your universe, it can yet by true heart-energy become flame, and the brilliancy of heaven. Courage!’

‘This is the angel of the earth,  
And she is always weeping.’

3. ‘A poor man, and a man of a broken spirit, and yet one that can speak well to a petition.’ Yes; and you will see how true that eulogy of Mr. Wet-eyes is if you will run over in your mind

the outstanding instances of successful petitioners in the Scriptures. As you come down the Old and the New Testaments you will be astonished and encouraged to find how prevailing a fountain of tears always is with God. David with his swimming bed ; Jeremiah with his head waters ; Mary Magdalene over His feet with her welling eyes ; Peter's bitter cry all his life long as often as he heard a cock crow, and so on. So on through a multitude whose names are written in heaven, and who went up to heaven all the way with inconsolable sorrow because of their sins. They took words and turned to the Lord ; but,—better than the best words,—they took tears ; or rather, their tears took them. The best words, the words that the Holy Ghost Himself teacheth, if they are without tears, will avail nothing. Even inspired words will not pass through ; while, all the time, tears, mere tears, without words, are omnipotent with God. Words weary Him, while tears overcome and command Him. He inhabits the tears of Israel. Therefore, also, now, saith the Lord, turn ye unto Me with all your heart, and with weeping and with mourning. And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil. It is the same with ourselves. Tears move us. Tears melt us. We cannot resist tears. Even counterfeit tears, we cannot be sure that they are not true. And that is the main reason why our Lord is so good at speaking to a petition. It is because His whole heart, and all the moving passions of His heart, are in His intercessory

office. It is because He still remembers in the skies His tears, His agonies, and cries. It is because He is entered into the holiest with His own tears as well as with His own blood. And it is because He will remain and abide before the Father the Man of Sorrows till our last petition is answered, and till God has wiped the last tear from our eyes. When He was in the coasts of Cæsarea-Philippi, our Lord felt a great curiosity to find out who the people thereabouts took Him to be. And it must have touched His heart to be told that some men had insight enough to insist that He was the prophet Jeremiah come back again to weep over Jerusalem. He is Elias, said some. No; He is John the Baptist risen from the dead, said others. No, no; said some men who saw deeper than their neighbours. His head is waters, and His eyes are a fountain of tears. Do you not see that He so often escapes into a lodge in the wilderness to weep for our sins? No; He is neither John nor Elijah; He is Jeremiah come back again to weep over Jerusalem! And even an apostle, looking back at the beginning of our Lord's priesthood on earth, says that He was prepared for His office by prayers and supplications, and with strong crying and tears. From all that, then, let us learn and lay to heart that if we would have one to speak well to our petitions, the Man of Sorrows is that one. And then, as His remembrancers on our behalf, let us engage all those among our friends who have the same grace of tears. But, above all, let us be men of tears ourselves. For all the tears and all the intercessions of our great High Priest, and all the

importunings of our best friends to boot, will avail us nothing if our own eyes are dry. Let us, then, turn back to Bishop Andrewes's prayer for the grace of tears, and offer it every night with him till our head, like his, is holy waters, and till, like him, we get beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

4. 'Clear as tears' is a Persian proverb when they would praise their purest spring water. But Mr. Wet-eyes has from henceforth spoiled the point of that proverb for us. 'I see,' he said, 'dirt in mine own tears, and filthiness in the bottom of my prayers.' Mr. Wet-eyes is hopeless. Mr. Wet-eyes is intolerable. Mr. Wet-eyes would weary out the patience of a saint. There is no satisfying or pacifying or ever pleasing this morbose Mr. Wet-eyes. The man is absolutely insufferable. Why, prayers and tears that the most and best of God's people cannot attain to are spurned and spat upon by Mr. Wet-eyes. The man is beside himself with his tears. For, tears that would console and assure us for a long season after them, he will weep over them as we scarce weep over our worst sins. His closet always turns all his comeliness to corruption. He comes out of his closet after all night in it with his psalm-book wrung to pulp, and with all his righteousnesses torn to filthy rags; till all men escape Mr. Wet-eyes' society—all men except Mr. Desires-awake. I will go out on your errand now, said Mr. Desires-awake, if you will send Mr. Wet-eyes with me. And thus the two twin sons of sorrow for sin and hunger after holiness went out arm in arm to the great pavilion together, Mr.

Desires-awake with his rope upon his head, and Mr. Wet-eyes with his hands wringing together. Thus they went to the Prince's pavilion. I gave you a specimen of one of Mr. Wet-eyes' prayers in the introduction to this discourse, and you did not discover much the matter with it, did you? You did not discover much filthiness in the bottom of that prayer, did you? I am sure you did not. Ah! but that is because you have not yet got Mr. Wet-eyes' eyes. When you get his eyes; when you turn and employ upon yourselves and upon your tears and upon your prayers his always-wet eyes,—then you will begin to understand and love and take sides with this inconsolable soul, and will choose his society rather than that of any other man—as often, at any rate, as you go out to the Prince's pavilion door.

5. 'Mr. Repentance was my father, but good men sometimes have bad children, and the most sincere do sometimes beget great hypocrites. But, I pray Thee, take not offence at the unqualifiedness of Thy servant.' Take good note of that uncommon expression, 'unqualifiedness,' in Mr. Wet-eyes' confession, all of you who are attending to what is being said. Lay 'unqualifiedness' to heart. Learn how to qualify yourselves before you begin to pray. In his fine comment on the 137th Psalm, Matthew Henry discourses delightfully on what he calls 'deliberate tears.' Look up that raciest of commentators, and see what he there says about the deliberate tears of the captives in Babylon. It was the lack of sufficient deliberation in his tears that condemned and alarmed Mr. Wet-eyes that

day. He felt now that he had not deliberated and qualified himself properly before coming to the Prince's pavilion. Do not take up your time or your thoughts with mere curiosities, either in your Bible or in any other good book, says À Kempis. Read such things rather as may yield compunction to your heart. And again, give thyself to compunction, and thou shalt gain much devotion thereby. Mr. Wet-eyes, good and true soul, was afraid that he had not qualified himself enough by compunctious reading and self-recollection. The sincere, he sobbed out, do often beget hypocrites! 'Our hearts are so deceitful in the matter of repentance,' says Jeremy Taylor, 'that the masters of the spiritual life are fain to invent suppletory arts and stratagems to secure the duty.' Take not offence at the lack of all such suppletory arts and stratagems in thy servant, said poor Wet-eyes. All which would mean in the most of us: Take not offence at my rawness and ignorance in the spiritual life, and especially in the life of inward devotion. Do not count up against me the names and the numbers and the prices of my poems, and plays, and novels, and newspapers, and then the number of my devotional books. Compare not my outlay on my body and on this life with my outlay on my soul and on the life to come. Oh, take not mortal offence at the shameful and scandalous unqualifiedness of Thy miserable servant. My father and my mother read the books of the soul, but they have left behind them a dry-eyed reprobate in me! Say that to-night as you look around on the grievous famine of the suppletory

arts and stratagems of repentance and reformation in your heathenish bedroom.

Spiritual preaching; real face to face, inward, verifiable, experimental, spiritual preaching; preaching to a heart in the agony of its sanctification; preaching to men whose whole life is given over to making them a new heart—that kind of preaching is scarcely ever heard in our day. There is great intellectual ability in the pulpit of our day, great scholarship, great eloquence, and great earnestness, but spiritual preaching, preaching to the spirit—‘wet-eyed’ preaching—is a lost art. At the same time, if that living art is for the present overlaid and lost, the literature of a deeper spiritual day abides to us, and our spiritually-minded people are not confined to us, they are not dependent on us. Well, this is the Communion week with us yet once more. Will you not, then, make it the beginning of some of the suppletory arts and stratagems of the spiritual life with yourselves? I cannot preach as I would like on such subjects, but I can tell you who could, and who, though dead, yet speak by their immortal books. You have the wet-eyed psalms; but they are beyond the depth of most people. Their meaning seems to us on the surface, and we all read and sing them, but let us not therefore think that we understand them. I cannot compel you to read the books, and to read little else but the books, that would in time, and by God’s blessing, lead you into the depths of the psalms; but I can wash my hands so far in making their names so many household words among my people. The *Way to Christ*, the

*Imitation of Christ*, the *Theologia Germanica*, Tauler's *Sermons*, the *Mortification of Sin*, and *Indwelling Sin in Believers*, the *Saints' Rest*, the *Holy Living and Dying*, the *Privata Sacra*, the *Private Devotions*, the *Serious Call*, the *Christian Perfection*, the *Religious Affections*, and such like. All that, and you still unqualified! All that, and your eyes still dry!

## XX

MR. HUMBLE THE JURYMAN, AND  
MISS HUMBLE-MIND THE SER-  
VANT-MAID

‘Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.’—*Our Lord*.

‘Be clothed with humility.’—*Peter*.

‘God’s chiefest saints are the least in their own eyes.’—*À Kempis*.

‘Without humility all our other virtues are but vices.’—*Pascal*.

‘Humility does not consist in having a worse opinion of ourselves than we deserve.’—*Law*.

‘Humility lies close upon the heart, and its tests are exceedingly delicate and subtle.’—*Newman*.



OUR familiar English word ‘humility’ comes down to us from the Latin root *humus*, which means the earth or the ground. Humility, therefore, is that in the mind and in the heart of a man which is low down even to the very earth. A humble-minded man may not have learning enough to know the etymology of the name which best describes his character, but the divine nature which is in him teaches him to look down, to walk meekly and softly, and to speak seldom, and always in love. For humility, while it takes its lowly name from earth, all the time has its true nature from heaven. Humility is full of all meekness, modesty, submissiveness, teachableness, sense of inability, sense of unworthiness, sense of ill-desert.

Till, with that new depth and new intensity that the Scriptures and religious experience have given to this word, as to so many other words, humility, in the vocabulary of the spiritual life, has come to be applied to that low estimate of ourselves which we come to form and to entertain as we are more and more enlightened about God and about ourselves; about the majesty, glory, holiness, beauty, and blessedness of the divine nature, and about our own unspeakable evil, vileness, and misery as sinners. And, till humility has come to rank in Holy Scripture, and in the lives and devotions of all God's saints, as at once the deepest root and the ripest fruit of all the divine graces that enter into, and, indeed, constitute the life of God in the heart of man. Humility, evangelical humility, sings Edwards in his superb and seraphic poem the *Religious Affections*,—evangelical humility is the sense that the true Christian has of his own utter insufficiency, despicableness, and odiousness, a sense which is peculiar to the true saint. But to compensate the true saint for this sight and sense of himself, he has revealed to him an accompanying sense of the absolutely transcendent beauty of the divine nature and of all divine things; a sight and a sense that quite overcome the heart and change to holiness all the dispositions and inclinations and affections of the heart. The essence of evangelical humility, says Edwards, consists in such humility as becomes a creature in himself exceeding sinful, but at the same time, under a dispensation of grace, and this is the greatest and most essential thing in all true religion.

1. Well, then, our Mr. Humble was a juryman in Mansoul, and his name and his nature eminently fitted him for his office. I never was a juryman; but, if I were, I feel sure I would come home from the court a far humbler man than I went up to it. I cannot imagine how a judge can remain a proud man, or an advocate, or a witness, or a juryman, or a spectator, or even a policeman. I am never in a criminal court that I do not tremble with terror all the time. I say to myself all the time,—there stands John Newton but for the preventing grace of God. ‘I will not sit as a judge to try General Boulanger, because I hate him,’ said M. Renault in the French Senate. Mr. Humble himself could not have made a better speech to the bench than that when his name was called to be sworn. Let us all remember John Newton and M. Renault when we would begin to write or to speak about any arrested, accused, found-out man. Let other men’s arrests, humiliations, accusations, and sentences only make us search well our own past, and that will make us ever humbler and ever humbler men ourselves; ever more penitent men, and ever more prayerful men.

2. And then Miss Humble-mind, his only daughter, was a servant-maid. There is no office so humble but that a humble mind will not put on still more humility in it. What a lesson in humility, not Peter only got that night in the upper room, but that happy servant-maid also who brought in the bason and the towel. Would she ever after that night grumble and give up her place in a passion because she had been asked to

do what was beneath her to do? Would she ever leave that house for any wages? Would she ever see that bason without kissing it? Would that towel not be a holy thing ever after in her proud eyes? How happy that house would ever after that night be, not so much because the Lord's Supper had been instituted in it, as because a servant was in it who had learned humility as she went about the house that night. Let all our servants hold up their heads and magnify their office. Their Master was once a servant, and He left us all, and all servants especially, an example that they should follow in His steps. Peter, whose feet were washed that night, never forgot that night, and his warm heart always warmed to a servant when he saw her with her bason and her towels, till he gave her half a chapter to herself in his splendid First Epistle. 'Servants, be subject,' he said, till his argument rose to a height above which not even Paul himself ever rose. Servant-maids, you must all have your own half-chapter out of First Peter by heart.

3. But I have as many students of one kind or other here to-night as I have maid-servants, and they will remember where a great student has said that knowledge without love but puffeth a student up. Now, the best knowledge for us all, and especially so for a student, is to know himself: his own ignorance, his own foolishness, his blindness of mind, and, especially, his corruption of heart. For that knowledge will both keep him from being puffed up with what he already knows, and it will also put him and keep him in the way of knowing

more. Self-knowledge will increase humility, and all the past masters both of science and of religion will tell him that humility is the certain note of the true student. You who are students all know *The Advancement of Learning*, just as the servants sitting beside you all know the second chapter of First Peter. Well, your master Verulam there tells you, and indeed on every page of his, that it is only to a humble, waiting, childlike temper that nature, like grace, will ever reveal up her secrets. 'There is small chance of truth at the goal when there is not a childlike humility at the starting-post.' Well, then, all you students who would fain get to the goal of science, make the Church of Christ your starting-post. Come first and come continually to the Christian school to learn humility, and then, as long as your talents, your years, and your opportunities hold out, both truth and goodness will open up to you at every step. Every step will be a goal, and at every goal a new step will open up. And God's smile and God's blessing, and all good men's love and honour and applause will support and reward you in your race. And, humble-minded to the truth herself, be, at the same time, humble-minded toward all who like yourself are seeking to know and to do the truth. A lately deceased student of nature was a pattern to all students as long as he waited on truth in his laboratory; and even as long as he remained at his desk to tell the world what he and other students had discovered in their search. But when any other student in his search after truth was compelled to cross that hitherto so exemplary student, he immediately became

as insolent as if he had been the greatest boor in the country. Till, as he spat out scorn at all who differed from him we always remembered this in À Kempis—‘Surely, an humble husbandman that serveth God is better than a proud philosopher that, neglecting himself, laboureth to understand the course of the heavens. It is great wisdom and perfection to esteem nothing of ourselves, and to think always well and highly of others.’ Students of arts, students of philosophy, students of law, students of medicine, and especially, students of divinity, be humble men. Labour in humility even more than in your special science. Humility will advance you in your special science; while, all the time, and at the end of time, she will be more to you than all the other sciences taken together. And since I have spoken of À Kempis, take this motto for all your life out of À Kempis, as the great and good Fénelon did, and it will guide you to the goal: *Ama nesciri et pro nihilo reputari.*

4. But of all the men in the whole world it is ministers who should simply, as Peter says, be clothed with humility, and that from head to foot. And, first as divinity students, and then as pastors and preachers, we who are ministers have advantages and opportunities in this respect quite peculiar and private to ourselves. For, while other students are spending their days and their nights on the ancient classics of Greece and Rome, the student who is to be a minister is buried in the Psalms, in the Gospels, and in the Epistles. While the student of law is deep in his commentaries and his cases, the student of divinity is deep in the study of experimental

religion. And while the medical student is full of the diseases of animals and of men, the theological student is absorbed in the holiness of the divine nature, and in the plague of the human heart, and, especially, he is drowned deeper every day in his own. And he who has begun a curriculum like that and is not already putting on a humility beyond all other men had better lose no more time, but turn himself at once to some other way of making his bread. The word of God and his own heart,—yes ; what a sure school of evangelical humility to every evangelically-minded student is that ! And, then, after that, and all his days, his congregational communion-roll and his visiting-book. Let no minister who would be found of God clothed and canopied over with humility ever lose sight of his communion-roll and pastoral visitation-book. I defy any minister to keep those records always open before him and yet remain a proud man, a self-respecting, self-satisfied, self-righteous man. For, what secret histories of his own folly, neglect, rashness, offensiveness, hot-headedness, self-seeking, self-pleasing vanity, now puffed up over one man, now cast down and full of gloom over another, what self-flattery here, and what resentment and retaliation there ; and so on, as only his own eyes and his Divine Master's eye can read between every diary line. What shame will cover that minister as with a mantle when he thinks what the Christian ministry might be made, and then takes home to himself what he has made it ! Let any minister shut himself in with his communion-roll and his visiting-book before each returning communion season, and there

will be one worthy communicant at least in the congregation : one who will have little appetite all that week for any other food but the broken Body and the shed Blood of his Redeemer. But these are professional matters that the outside world has nothing to do with and would not understand. Only, let all young men who would have evangelical humility absolutely secured and sealed to them,—let them come and be ministers. Just as all young men who would have any satisfaction in life, any sense of work well done and worthy of reward, any taste of a goal attained and an old age earned, let them take to anything in all this world but the evangelical pulpit and its accompanying pastorate.

5. But humility is not a grace of the pulpit and the pastorate only. It is not those who are separated by the Holy Ghost to study the word of God and their own hearts all their life long only, who are called to put on humility. All men are called to that grace. There is no acceptance with God for any man without that grace. There is no approach to God for any man without it. All salvation begins and ends in it. Would you, then, fain possess it? Would you, then, fain attain to it? Then let there be no mystery and no mistake made about it. Would any man here fain get down to that deep valley where God's saints walk in the sweet shade and lie down in green pastures? Well, I warrant him that just before him, and already under his eye, there is a flight of steps cut in the hill, which steps, if he will take them, will, step after step, take him also down to that bottom. The whole face of this steep and slippery world is sculptured deep with

such submissive steps. Indeed, when a man's eyes are once turned down to that valley, there is nothing to be seen anywhere in all this world but downward steps. Look whichever way you will, there gleams out upon you yet another descending stair. Look back at the way you came up. But take care lest the sight turns you dizzy. Look at any spot you once crossed on your way up, and, lo! every footprint of yours has become a descending step. You sink down as you look, broken down with shame and with horror and with remorse. There are people, some still left in this world, and some gone to the other world, people whom you dare not think of lest you should turn sick and lose hold and hope. There are places you dare not visit: there are scenes you dare not recall. Lucifer himself would be a humble angel with his wings over his face if he had a past like yours, and would often enough return to look at it. And, then, not the past only, but at this present moment there are people and things placed close beside you, and kept close beside you, and you close beside them, on divine purpose just to give you continual occasion and offered opportunity to practise humility. They are kept close beside you just on purpose to humiliate you, to cut out your descending steps, to lend you their hand, and to say to you: Keep near us. Only keep your eye on us, and we will see you down! And then, if you are resolute enough to look within, if you are able to keep your eye on what goes on in your own heart like heart-beats, then, already, I know where you are. You are under all men's feet. You are ashamed to lift up your eyes to meet other men's

eyes. You dare not take their honest hands. You could tell Edwards himself things about humiliation now that would make his terribly searching and humbling book quite tame and tasteless.

Come, then, O high-minded man, be sane, be wise. If you were up on a giddy height, and began to see that certain death was straight and soon before you, what would you do? You know what you would do. You would look with all your eyes for such steps as would take you safest down to the solid ground. You would welcome any hand stretched out to help you. You would be most attentive and most obedient and most thankful to any one who would assure you that this is the right way down. And you would keep on saying to yourself—Once I were well down, no man shall see me up here again. Well, my brethren, humiliation, humility, is to be learned just in the same way, and it is to be learned in no other way. He who would be down must just come down. That is all. A step down, and another step down, and another, and another, and already you are well down. A humble act done to-day, a humble word spoken to-morrow; humiliation after humiliation accepted every day that you would at one time have spurned from you with passion; and then your own vile, hateful, unbearable heart—all that is ordained of God to bring you down, down to the dust; and this last, your own heart, will bring you down to the very depths of hell. And thus, after all your other opportunities and ordinances of humility are embraced and exhausted, then the plunges, the depths, the abysses of humility that God will open up in

your own heart will all work in you a meetness for heaven and a ripeness for its glory, that shall for ever reward you for all that degradation and shame and self-despair which have been to you the sure way and the only way to everlasting life.

## XXI

MASTER THINK-WELL, THE LATE AND  
ONLY SON OF OLD MR. MEDITATION

‘As he thinketh in his heart, so is he.’—*A Proverb.*



T was a truly delightful sight to see old Mr. Meditation and his only son, our little Think-well, out among the woods and hedgerows of a summer afternoon. Little Think-well was the son of his father's old age. That dry tree used to say to himself that if ever he was intrusted with a son of his own, he would make his son his most constant and his most confidential companion all his days. And so he did. The eleventh of Deuteronomy had become a greater and greater text to that childless man as he passed the mid-time of his days. ‘Therefore,’ he used to say to himself, as he walked abroad alone, and as other men passed him with their children at their side—‘Therefore ye shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the doorposts of thine house and upon thy gates.’ And thus it was that, as the little lad grew up, there was no day of all the seven that he so much numbered and waited for as was that sacred day

on which his father was free to take little Think-well by the hand and lead him out to talk to him. 'No,' said an Edinburgh boy to his mother the other day—'No, mother,' he said, 'I have no liking for these Sunday papers with their poor stories and their pictures. I am to read the Bible stories and the Bible biographies first.' He is not my boy. I wish my boys were all like him. 'And Plutarch on week-days for such a boy,' I said to his mother. How to keep a decent shred of the old sanctification on the modern Sabbath-day is the anxious inquiry of many fathers and mothers among us. My friend with her manly-minded boy, and Mr. Meditation with little Think-well had no trouble in that matter.

'And once I said,  
As I remember, looking round upon those rocks  
And hills on which we all of us were born,  
That God who made the Great Book of the world  
Would bless such piety ;—  
Never did worthier lads break English bread :  
The finest Sunday that the autumn saw,  
With all its mealy clusters of ripe nuts,  
Could never keep those boys away from church,  
Or tempt them to an hour of Sabbath breach,  
Leonard and James !'

Think-well and that mother's son.

Old Mr. Meditation, the father, was sprung of a poor but honest and industrious stock in the city. He had not had many talents or opportunities to begin with, but he had made the very best of the two he had. And then, when the two estates of Mr. Fritter-day and Mr. Let-good-slip were sequestered to the crown, the advisers of the crown handed over those two neglected estates to Mr. Meditation to improve them for the common good,

and after him to his son, whose name we know. The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord, and He delighteth in his way. I have been young and now am old ; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

Now, this Think-well old Mr. Meditation had by Mrs. Piety, and she was the daughter of the old Recorder. 'I am Thy servant,' said Mrs. Piety's son on occasion all his days—'I am Thy servant and the son of Thine handmaid.' And at that so dutiful acknowledgment of his a long procession of the servants of God pass up before our eyes with their sainted mothers leaning on the arms of their great sons. The Psalmist and his mother, the Baptist and his mother, our Lord and His mother, the author of the Fourth Gospel and his mother, Paul's son and successor in the gospel and his mother and grandmother, the author of *The Confessions* and his mother ; and, in this noble connection, I always think of Halyburton and his good mother. And in this ennobling connection you will all think of your own mother also, and before we go any further you will all say, I also, O Lord, am Thy servant and the son of Thine handmaid. 'Fathers and mothers handle children differently,' says Jeremy Taylor. And then that princely teacher of the Church of Christ Catholic goes on to tell us how Mrs. Piety handled her little Think-well which she had borne to Mr. Meditation. After other things, she said this every night before she took sleep to her tired eyelids, this : 'Oh give me grace to bring him up. Oh may I always instruct him with diligence and meekness ; govern him with

prudence and holiness; lead him in the paths of religion and justice; never provoking him to wrath, never indulging him in folly, and never conniving at an unworthy action. Oh sanctify him in his body, soul, and spirit. Let all his thoughts be pure and holy to the Searcher of hearts; let his words be true and prudent before men; and may he have the portion of the meek and the humble in the world to come, and all through Jesus Christ our Lord!' How could a son get past a father and a mother like that? Even if, for a season, he had got past them, he would be sure to come back. Only, their young Think-well never did get past his father and his mother.

There was not so much word of heredity in his day; but without so much of the word young Think-well had the whole of the thing. And as time went on, and the child became more and more the father of the man, it was seen and spoken of by all the neighbours who knew the house, how that their only child had inherited all his father's head, and all his mother's heart, and then that he had reverted to his maternal grandfather in his so keen and quick sense of right and wrong. All which, under whatever name it was held, was a most excellent outfit for our young gentleman. His old father, good natural head and all, had next to no book-learning. He had only two or three books that he read a hundred times over till he had them by heart. And as he sighed over his unlettered lot he always consoled himself with a saying he had once got out of one of his old books. The saying of some great authority was to this effect, that 'an

old and simple woman, if she loves Jesus, may be greater than our great brother Bonaventure.' He did not know who Bonaventure was, but he always got a reproof again out of his name. Think-well, to his father's immense delight, was a very methodical little fellow, and his father and he had orderly little secrets that they told to none. Little secret plans as to what they were to read about, and think about, and pray about on certain days of the week and at certain hours of the day and the night. You must not call the father an old pedant, for the fact is, it was the son who was the pedant if there was one in that happy house. The two intimate friends had a word between them they called *agenda*. And nobody but themselves knew where they had borrowed that uncouth word, what language it was, or what it meant. Only in the old man's tattered pocket-book there were things like this found by his minister after his death. Indeed, in a museum of such relics this is still to be read under a glass case, and in old Mr. Meditation's ramshackle hand: 'Monday, death; Tuesday, judgment; Wednesday, heaven; Thursday, hell; Friday, my past life back to my youth; Saturday, the passion of my Saviour; Lord's day, creation, salvation, and my own.—M.' And then, on an utterly illegible page, this: 'Jesus, Thy life and Thy words are a perpetual sermon to me. I meditate on Thee all the day. Make my memory a vessel of election. Let all my thoughts be plain, honest, pious, simple, prudent, and charitable, till Thou art pleased to draw the curtain and let me see Thyself, O Eternal Jesu!' If I had time I could tell you more about Think-well's quaint

old father. But the above may be better than nothing about the rare old gentleman.

A great authority has said—two great authorities have said in their enigmatic way, that a ‘dry light is ever the best.’ That may be so in some cases and to some uses, but nothing can be more sure than this, that the light that little Think-well got from his father’s head was excellently drenched in his mother’s heart. The sweet moisture of his mother’s heart mixed up beautifully with his father’s drier head and made a fine combination in their one boy as it turned out. Her minister, preaching on one occasion on my text for to-night, had said—and she had such a memory for a sermon that she had never forgotten it, but had laid it up in her heart on the spot—‘As the philosopher’s stone,’ the old-fashioned preacher had said, ‘turns all metals into gold, as the bee sucks honey out of every flower, and as the good stomach sucks out some sweet and wholesome nourishment out of whatever it takes into itself, so doth a holy heart, so far as sanctified, convert and digest all things into spiritual and useful thoughts. This you may see in Psalm cvii. 43.’ And in her plain, silent, hidden, motherly way Mistress Piety adorned her old minister’s doctrine of the holy heart that he was always preaching about, till she shared her soft and holy heart with her son, as his father had shared his clear and deep, if too unlearned, head.

We have one grandmother at least signalised in the Bible ; but no grandfather, so far as I remember. But amends are made for that in the *Holy War*. For Think-well would never have been the man he

became had it not been for the old Recorder, his grandfather on his mother's side. Some superficial people said that there was too much severity in the old Recorder; but his grandson who knew him best, never said that. He was the best of men, his grandson used to stand up for him, and say, I shall never forget the debt I owe him. It was he who taught me first to make conscience of my thoughts. Indeed, as for my secret thoughts, I had taken no notice of them till that summer afternoon walk home from church, when we sat down among the bushes and he showed me on the spot the way. And I can say to his memory that scarce for one waking hour have I any day forgotten the lesson. The lesson how to make a conscience, as he said, of all my thoughts about myself and about all my neighbours. Such, then, were Think-well's more immediate ancestors, and such was the inheritance that they all taken together had left him.

Think-well! Think-well! My brethren, what do you think, what do you say, as you hear that fine name? I will tell you what I think and say. If I overcome, and have that white stone given to me, and in that stone a new name written which no man shall know saving he that receiveth it; and if it were asked me here to-night what I would like my new name to be, I would say on the spot, Let it be THINK-WELL! Let my new name among the saved and the sanctified before the throne be THINK-WELL! As, O God, it will be the bottomless pit to me, if I am forsaken of Thee for ever to my evil thoughts. Send down and prevent it. Stir up all Thy strength and give commandment to


prevent it. Do Thou prevent it. For, after I have done all,—after I have made all my overt acts blameless, after I have tamed my tongue which no man can tame,—all that only the more throws my thoughts into a very devil's garden, a thicket of hell, a secret swamp of sin to the uttermost. How, then, am I ever to attain to that white stone and that shining name? And that in a world of such truth that every man's name and title there shall be a strict and true and entirely accurate and adequate description and exposition of the very thoughts and intents and imaginations of his heart? How shall I, how shall you, my brethren, ever have 'Think-well' written on our forehead?—Well, with God all things are possible. With God, with a much meditating mind, and a true and humble and tender heart, and a pure conscience, a conscience void of offence, working together with Him—He, with all these inheritances and all these environments working together with Him, will at last enable us, you and me, to lift up such a clear and transparent forehead. But not without our constant working together. We must ourselves make head, and heart, and, especially, conscience of all our thoughts—for a long lifetime we must do that. The *Ductor Dubitantium* has a deep chapter on 'The Thinking Conscience.' And what a reproof to many of us lies in the mere name! For how much evil-thinking and evil-speaking we have all been guilty of through our unthinking conscience and through a zeal for God, but a zeal without knowledge. Look back at the history of the Church and see; look back at your own history in the Church and see. Yes,

make conscience of your thoughts: but let it first be an instructed conscience, a thinking conscience, a conscience full of the best and the clearest light. And then let us also make ourselves a new heart and a new spirit, as Ezekiel has it. For our hearts are continually perverting and polluting and poisoning our thoughts. That is a fearful thing that is said about the men on whom the flood soon came. You remember what is said about them, and in explanation and justification of the flood. God saw, it is said, that every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts was evil, and only evil continually. Fearful! Far more fearful than ten floods! O God, Thou seest us. And Thou seest all the imaginations of the thoughts of our hearts. Oh give us all a mind and a heart and a conscience to think of nothing, to fear nothing, to watch and to pray about nothing compared with our thoughts. 'As for my secret thoughts,' says the author of the *Holy War* and the creator of Master Think-well — 'As for my secret thoughts, I paid no attention to them. I never knew I had them. I had no pain, or shame, or guilt, or horror, or despair on account of them till John Gifford took me and showed me the way.' And then when John Bunyan, being the man of genius he was,—as soon as he began to attend to his own secret thoughts, then the first faint outline of this fine portrait of Think-well began to shine out on the screen of this great artist's imagination, and from that sanctified screen this fine portrait of Think-well and his family has shined into our hearts to-night.

## XXII

MR. GOD'S-PEACE, A GOODLY PERSON,  
AND A SWEET-NATURED GENTLEMAN

'Let the peace of God rule in your hearts,—the peace of God that passeth all understanding.'—*Paul*.

 OHN BUNYAN is always at his very best in allegory. In some other departments of work John Bunyan has had many superiors; but when he lays down his head on his hand and begins to dream, as we see him in some of the old woodcuts, then he is alone; there is no one near him. We have not a few greater divines in pure divinity than John Bunyan. We have some far better expositors of Scripture than John Bunyan, and we have some far better preachers. John Bunyan at his best cannot open up a deep Scripture like that prince of expositors, Thomas Goodwin. John Bunyan in all his books has nothing to compare for intellectual strength and for theological grasp with Goodwin's chapter on the peace of God, in his sixth book in *The Work of the Holy Ghost*. John Bunyan cannot set forth divine truth in an orderly method and in a built-up body like John Owen. He cannot Platonize divine truth like his Puritan contemporary, John Howe. He cannot soar high as heaven in the beauty and the sweet-

ness of gospel holiness like Jonathan Edwards. He has nothing of the philosophical depth of Richard Hooker, and he has nothing of the vast learning of Jeremy Taylor. But when John Bunyan's mind and heart begin to work through his imagination, then—

‘ His language is not ours.

‘Tis my belief God speaks ; no tinker hath such powers.’

1. In the beginning of his chapter on ‘ Speaking peace,’ Thomas Goodwin tells his reader that he is going to fully couch all his intendments under a metaphor and an allegory. But Goodwin's reader has read and re-read the great chapter, and has not yet discovered where the metaphor and the allegory came in and where they went out. But Bunyan does not need to advertise his reader that he is going to couch his teaching in his imagination.

‘ But having now my method by the end,

Still, as I pulled it came : and so I penned

It down ; until at last it came to be

For length and breadth the bigness that you see.’

The Blessed Prince, he begins, did also ordain a new officer in the town, and a goodly person he was. His name was Mr. God's-peace. This man was set over my Lord Will-be-will, my Lord Mayor, Mr. Recorder, the subordinate preacher, Mr. Mind, and over all the natives of the town of Mansoul. Himself was not a native of the town, but came with the Prince from the court above. He was a great acquaintance of Captain Credence and Captain Good-hope ; some say they

were kin, and I am of that opinion too. This man, as I said, was made governor of the town in general, especially over the castle, and Captain Credence was to help him there. And I made great observation of it, that so long as all things went in the town as this sweet-natured gentleman would have them go, the town was in a most happy condition. Now there were no jars, no chiding, no interferences, no unfaithful doings in all the town; every man in Mansoul kept close to his own employment. The gentry, the officers, the soldiers, and all in place, observed their order. And as for the women and the children of the town, they followed their business joyfully. They would work and sing, work and sing, from morning till night; so that quite through the town of Mansoul now nothing was to be found but harmony, quietness, joy, and health. And this lasted all the summer. I shall step aside at this point and shall let Jonathan Edwards comment on this sweet-natured gentleman and his heavenly name. ‘God’s peace has an exquisite sweetness,’ says Edwards. ‘It is exquisitely sweet because it has so firm a foundation on the everlasting rock. It is sweet also because it is so perfectly agreeable to reason. It is sweet also because it riseth from holy and divine principles, which, as they are the virtue, so are they the proper happiness of man. This peace is exquisitely sweet also because of the greatness of the good that the saints enjoy, being no other than the infinite bounty and fulness of that God who is the Fountain of all good. It is sweet also because it shall be enjoyed to perfection here-

after.' An enthusiastic student has counted up the number of times that this divine word 'sweetness' occurs in Edwards, and has proved that no other word of the kind occurs so often in the author of *True Virtue* and *The Religious Affections*. And I can well believe it; unless the 'beauty of holiness' runs it close. Still, this sweet-natured gentleman will continue to live for us in his government and jurisdiction in Mansoul and in John Bunyan even more than in Jonathan Edwards.

2. 'Now Mr. God's-peace, the new Governor of Mansoul, was not a native of the town; he came down with his Prince from the court above.' 'He was not a native'—let that attribute of his be written in letters of gold on every gate and door and wall within his jurisdiction. When you need the governor and would seek him at any time or in any place in all the town and cannot find him, recollect yourself where he came from: he may have returned thither again. John Bunyan has couched his deepest instruction to you in that single sentence in which he says, 'Mr. God's-peace was not a native of the town.' John Bunyan has gathered up many gospel Scriptures into that single allegorical sentence. He has made many old and familiar passages fresh and full of life again in that one metaphorical sentence. It is the work of genius to set forth the wont and the well known in a clear, simple, and at the same time surprising, light like that. There is a peace that is native and natural to the town of Mansoul, and to understand that peace, its nature, its grounds, its extent, and

its range, is most important to the theologian and to the saint. But to understand the peace of God, that supreme peace, the peace that passeth all understanding,—that is the highest triumph of the theologian and the highest wisdom of the saint. The prophets and the psalmists of the Old Testament are all full of the peace that God gave to His people Israel. My peace I give unto you, says our Lord also. Paul also has taken up that peace that comes to us through the blood of Christ, and has made it his grand message to us and to all sinful and sin-disquieted men. And John Bunyan has shown how sure and true a successor of the apostles of Christ he is, just in his portrait of this sweet-natured gentleman who was not a native of Mansoul, but who came from that same court from which Emmanuel Himself came. And it is just this ‘outlandishness’ of this sweet-natured gentleman; it is just this heavenly origin and divine extraction of his that makes him sometimes and in some things to surpass all earthly understanding. ‘I am coming some day soon,’ said a divinity student to me the other Sabbath night, ‘to have you explain and clear up the atonement to me.’ ‘I shall be glad to see you,’ I said, ‘but not on that errand.’ No. Paul himself could not do it. Paul said that the atonement and the peace of it passed all his understanding. And John Bunyan says here that not the Prince only, but his officer Mr. God’s-peace also, was not native to the town of Mansoul, but came straight down from heaven into that town—and what can the man do who cometh after two kings like Paul and Bunyan? I

have not forgotten my Edwards where he says that the exquisite sweetness of this peace is perfectly agreeable to reason. As, indeed, so it is. And yet, if reason will have a clear and finished and all-round answer to all her difficulties and objections and fault-findings, I fear she cannot have it here. The time may come when our reason also shall be so enlarged, and so sanctified, and so exalted, that she shall be able with all saints to see the full mystery of that which in this present dispensation passeth all understanding. But till then, only let God's peace enter our hearts with God's Son, and then let our hearts say if that peace must not in some high and deep way be according to the highest and the deepest reason, since its coming into our hearts has produced in our hearts and in our lives such reasonable, and right, and harmonious, and peaceful, and every way joyful results.

3. Governor God's-peace had not many in the town of Mansoul to whom he could confide all his thoughts and with whom he could consult. But there were two officer friends of his stationed in the town with whom he was every day in close correspondence, viz., the Captain Credence and the Captain Good-hope. Their so close intimacy will not be wondered at when it is known that those three officers had all come in together with Emmanuel the Conqueror. Those three young captains had done splendid service, each at the head of his own battalion, in the days of the invasion and the conquest of Mansoul, and they had all had their present titles, and privileges, and lands, and offices, patented to them on the

strength of their past services. The Captain Credence had all along been the confidential aide-de-camp and secretary of the Prince. Indeed, the Prince never called Captain Credence a servant at all, but always a friend. The Prince had always conveyed his mind about all Mansoul's matters first to Captain Credence, and then that confidential captain conveyed whatever specially concerned God's-peace and Good-hope to those excellent and trusty soldiers. Credence first told all matters to God's-peace and then the two soon talked over Good-hope to their mind and heart. Some say that the three officers, Credence, God's-peace, and Good-hope, were kin, adds our historian, and I, he adds, am of that opinion too. And to back up his opinion he takes an extract out of the Herald's College books which runs thus: 'Romans, fifteenth and thirteenth: Now, the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.' Some say the three officers were of kin, and I am of that opinion too.

4. On account both of his eminent services and his great abilities, the Prince saw it good to set Mr. God's-peace over the whole town. And thus it was that the governor's jurisdiction extended and held not only over the people of the town, but also over all the magistrates and all the other officers of the town, such as my Lord Will-be-will, my Lord Mayor, Mr. Recorder, Mr. Mind, and all. It needed all the governor's authority and ability to keep his feet in his office over all the other rulers of the town, but by far his greatest trouble always was

with the Recorder. Old Mr. Conscience, the Town Recorder, had a very difficult post to hold and a very difficult part to play in that still so divided and still so unsettled town. What with all those murderers and man-slayers, thieves and prostitutes, skulkers and secret rebels, on the one hand, and with Governor God's-peace and his so unaccountable and so autocratic ways, on the other hand, the Recorder's office was no sinecure. All the misdemeanours and malpractices of the town,—and they were happening every day and every night,—were all reported to the Recorder; they were all, so to say, charged home upon the Recorder, and he was held responsible for them all; till his office was a perfect laystall and cesspool of all the scum and corruption of the town. And yet, in would come Governor God's-peace, without either warning or explanation, and would demand all the Recorder's papers, and proofs, and affidavits, and what not, it had cost him so much trouble to get collected and indorsed, and would burn them all before the Recorder's face, and to his utter confusion, humiliation, and silence. So autocratic, so despotic, so absolute, and not-to-be-questioned was Governor God's-peace. The Recorder could not understand it, and could barely submit to it; my Lord Mayor could not understand it, and his clerk, Mr. Mind, would often oppose it; but there it was: Mr. Governor God's-peace was set over them all.

5. But the thing that always in the long-run justified the governorship of Mr. God's-peace, and reconciled all the other officers to his supremacy, was the way that the city settled down and

prospered under his benignant rule. All the other officers admitted that, somehow, his promotion and power had been the salvation of Mansoul. They all extolled their Prince's far-seeing wisdom in the selection, advancement, and absolute seat of Mr. God's-peace. And it would ill have become them to have said anything else; for they had little else to do but bask in the sun and enjoy the honours and the emoluments of their respective offices as long as Governor God's-peace held sway, and had all things in the city to his own mind. Now, it was on all hands admitted, as we read again with renewed delight, that there were no jars, no chiding, no interferences, no unfaithful doings in the town of Mansoul; but every man kept close to his own employment. The gentry, the officers, the soldiers, and all in place, observed their orders. And as for the women and children, they all followed their business joyfully. They would work and sing, work and sing, from morning till night, so that quite through the town of Mansoul now nothing was to be found but harmony, quietness, joy, and health. What more could be said of any governorship of any town than that? The Heavenly Court itself, out of which Governor God's-peace had come down, was not better governed than that. Harmony, quietness, joy, and health. No; the New Jerusalem itself will not surpass that. 'And this lasted all that summer.'

## XXIII

## THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH OF MANSOUL, AND MR. CONSCIENCE ONE OF HER PARISH MINISTERS

‘The Highest Himself shall establish her.’—*David*.

**T**HE princes of this world establish churches sometimes out of piety and sometimes out of policy. Sometimes their motive is the good of their people and the glory of God, and sometimes their sole motive is to buttress up their own Royal House, and to have a clergy around them on whom they can count. Prince Emmanuel had His motive, too, in setting up an establishment in Mansoul. As thus: When this was over, the Prince sent again for the elders of the town and communed with them about the ministry that He intended to establish in Mansoul. Such a ministry as might open to them and might instruct them in the things that did concern their present and their future state. For, said He to them, of yourselves, unless you have teachers and guides, you will not be able to know, and if you do not know, then you cannot do the will of My Father. At this news, when the elders of Mansoul brought it to the people, the whole town came running together, and all with one consent implored His Majesty that He

would forthwith establish such a ministry among them as might teach them both law and judgment, statute and commandment, so that they might be documented in all good and wholesome things. So He told them that He would graciously grant their requests and would straightway establish such a ministry among them.

Now, I will not enter to-night on the abstract benefits of such an Establishment. I will rather take one of the ministers who was presented to one of the parishes of Mansoul, and shall thus let you see how that State Church worked out practically in one of its ministers at any rate. And the preacher and pastor I shall so take up was neither the best minister in the town nor the worst; but, while a long way subordinate to the best, he was also by no means the least. The Reverend Mr. Conscience was our parish minister's name; his people sometimes called him The Recorder.

1. Well, then, to begin with, the Rev. Mr. Conscience was a native of the same town in which his parish church now stood. I am not going to challenge the wisdom of the patron who appointed his protégé to this particular living; only, I have known very good ministers who never got over the misfortune of having been settled in the same town in which they had been born and brought up. Or, rather, their people never got over it. One excellent minister, especially, I once knew, whose father had been a working man in the town, and his son had sometimes assisted his father before he went to college, and even between his college sessions, and the people he afterwards came to teach could never

get over that. It was not wise in my friend to accept that presentation in the circumstances, as the event abundantly proved. For, whenever he had to take his stand in his pulpit or in his pastorate against any of their evil ways, his people defended themselves and retaliated on him by reminding him that they knew his father and his mother, and had not forgotten his own early days. No doubt, in the case of Emmanuel and Mansoul and its minister, there were counterbalancing considerations and advantages both to minister and people; but it is not always so; and it was not so in the case of my unfortunate friend.

Forasmuch, so ran the Prince's presentation paper, as he is a native of the town of Mansoul, and thus has personal knowledge of all the laws and customs of the corporation, therefore he, the Prince, presented Mr. Conscience. That is to say, every man who is to be the minister of a parish should make his own heart and his own life his first parish. His own vineyard should be his first knowledge and his first care. And then out of that and after that he will be able to speak to his people, and to correct, and counsel, and take care of them. In Thomas Boston's *Memoirs* we continually come on entries like this: 'Preached on Ps. xlii. 5, and mostly on my own account.' And, again, we read in the same invaluable book for parish ministers, that its author did not wonder to hear that good had been done by last Sabbath's sermon, because he had preached it to himself and had got good to himself out of it before he took it to the pulpit. Boston kept his eye on himself in a way that the minister of Mansoul

himself could not have excelled. Till, not in his pulpit work only, but in such conventional, commonplace, and monotonous exercises as his family worship, he so read the Scriptures and so sang the psalms that his family worship was continually yielding him fruit as well as his public ministry. As our family worship and our public ministry will do, too, when we have the eye and the heart and the conscience that Thomas Boston had. 'I went to hear a preacher,' said Pascal, 'and I found a man in the pulpit.' Well, the parish minister of Mansoul was a man, and so was the parish minister of Ettrick. And that was the reason that the people of Simprin and Ettrick so often thought that Boston had them in his eye. Good pastor as he was, he could not have everybody in his eye. But he had himself in his eye, and that let him into the hearts and the homes of all his people. He was a true man, and thus a true minister.

2. Both Boston and the minister of Mansoul were well-read men also; so, indeed, in as many words, their fine biographies assure us. But that is just another way of saying what has been said about those two ministers over and over again already. William Law never was a parish minister. The English Crown of that day would not trust him with a parish. But what was the everlasting loss of some parish in England has become the everlasting gain of the whole Church of Christ. Law's enforced seclusion from outward ministerial activity only set him the more free to that inward activity which has been such a blessing to so many, and to so many ministers especially. And as to this of every

minister being well read, that master in Israel says: 'Above all, let me tell you that the book of books to you is your own heart, in which are written and engraven the deepest lessons of divine instruction. Learn, therefore, to be deeply attentive to the presence of God in your own hearts, who is always speaking, always instructing, always illuminating the heart that is attentive to Him.' Jonathan Edwards called the poor parish minister of Ettrick 'a truly great divine.' But Law goes on to say, 'A great divine is but a cant expression unless it signifies a man greatly advanced in the divine life. A great divine is one whose own experience and example are a demonstration of the reality of all the graces and virtues of the gospel. No divine has any more of the gospel in him than that which proves itself by the spirit, the actions, and the form of his life: the rest is but hypocrisy, not divinity.' Let all our parish ministers, then, give themselves to this kind of reading. Let them all aim at a doctor's degree in the divinity of their own hearts.

3. We are done at last, and we are done for ever, in Scotland, with patrons and with presentees; but I daresay our most Free Church people would be quite willing to surrender their dear-bought franchise if the old plan could even yet be made to work in all their parishes as it worked in Mansoul. For not only was the presented minister in this case a well-read man; he was also, what the best of the Scottish people have always loved and honoured, a man, as this history testifies, with a tongue as bravely hung as he had a head filled with judgment. In Scotland we like our minister to have a tongue

bravely hung, even when that is proved to our own despite. When any minister, parish minister or other, is seen to tune his pulpit, our respect for him is gone. The Presbyterian pulpit has been proverbially hard to tune, and it will be an ill day when it becomes easy. 'Here lies a man who had a brow for every good cause.' So it was engraven over one of Boston's elders. And so is it always: like priest, like people in the matter of the hang of the minister's tongue and in the boldness of the elder's brow.

'Bravely hung' is an ancient and excellent expression which has several shades of meaning in Bunyan. But in the present instance its meaning is modified and fixed by judgment. A bravely hung tongue; at the same time the parish minister of Mansoul's tongue was not a loosely-hung tongue. It was not a blustering, headlong, scolding, untamed tongue. The pulpit of Mansoul was tuned with judgment. He who filled that pulpit had a head filled with judgment. The ground of judgment is knowledge, and the minister of Mansoul was a man of knowledge. It was his early and ever-increasing knowledge of himself, and thus of other men; and then it was his excellent judgment as to the use he was to make of that knowledge; it was his sound knowledge what to say, when to say it, and how to say it,—it was all this that decided his Prince to make him the minister of Mansoul. How excellent and how rare a gift is judgment—judgment in counsel, judgment in speech, and judgment in action! 'I am very little serviceable with reference to public management,' writes the parish minister of Ettrick, 'being exceedingly defective in

ecclesiastical prudence ; but the Lord has given me a pulpit gift, not unacceptable : and who knows what He may do with me in that way ?' Who knows, indeed ! Now, there are many parish ministers who have a not unacceptable pulpit gift, and yet who are not content with that, but are always burying that gift in the earth and running away from it to attempt a public management in which they are exceedingly and conspicuously defective. Now, why do they do that ? Is their pulpit and their parish not sphere and opportunity enough for them ? Mine is a small parish, said Boston, but then it is mine. And a small parish may both rear and occupy a truly great divine. Let those ministers, then, who are defective in ecclesiastical prudence not be too much cast down. Ecclesiastical prudence is not in every case the highest kind of prudence. The presbytery, the synod, and the assembly are not any minister's first or best sphere. Every minister's first and best sphere is his parish. And the presbytery is not the end of the parish. The parish, the pastorate, and the pulpit are the end of both presbytery and synod and assembly. As for the minister of Mansoul, he was a well-read man, and also a man of courage to speak out the truth at every occasion, and he had a tongue as bravely hung as he had a head filled with judgment.

4. But there was one thing about the parish pulpit of Mansoul that always overpowered the people. They could not always explain it even to themselves what it was that sometimes so terrified them, and, sometimes, again, so enthralled them. They would say sometimes that their minister was more than a

mere man; that he was a prophet and a seer, and that his Master seemed sometimes to stand and speak again in His servant. And 'seer' was not at all an inappropriate name for their minister, so far as I can collect out of some remains of his that I have seen and some testimonies that I have heard. There was something awful and overawing, something seer-like and supernatural, in the pulpit of Mansoul. Sometimes the iron chains in which the preacher climbed up into the pulpit, and in which he both prayed and preached, struck a chill to every heart; and sometimes the garment of salvation in which he shone carried all their hearts captive. Some Sabbath mornings they saw it in his face and heard it in his voice that he had been on his bed in hell all last night; and then, next Sabbath, those who came back saw him descending into his pulpit from his throne in heaven.

'Yea, this man's brow, like to a title-page  
Foretells the nature of a tragic volume.  
Thou tremblest, and the whiteness in thy cheek  
Is apter than thy tongue to tell thine errand.'

If you think that I am exaggerating and magnifying the parish pulpit of Mansoul, take this out of the parish records for yourselves. 'And now,' you will read in one place, 'it was a day gloomy and dark, a day of clouds and thick darkness with Mansoul. Well, when the Sabbath-day was come he took for his text that in the prophet Jonah, "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy." And then there was such power and authority in that sermon, and such dejection seen in the countenances of the people that day that the like had

seldom been heard or seen. The people, when the sermon was done, were scarce able to go to their homes, or to betake themselves to their employments the whole week after. They were so sermon-smitten that they knew not what to do. For not only did their preacher show to Mansoul its sin, but he did tremble before them under the sense of his own, still crying out as he preached, Unhappy man that I am ! that I, a preacher, should have lived so senselessly and so sottishly in my parish, and be one of the foremost in its transgressions ! With these things he also charged all the lords and gentry of Mansoul to the almost distracting of them.' It was Sabbaths like that that made the people of Mansoul call their minister a seer.

5. And, then, there was another thing that I do not know how better to describe than by calling it the true catholicity, the true humility, and the true hospitality of the man. It is true he had no choice in the matter, for in setting up a standing ministry in Mansoul Emmanuel had done so with this reservation and addition. We have His very words. 'Not that you are to have your ministers alone,' He said. 'For my four captains, they can, if need be, and if they be required, not only privately inform, but publicly preach both good and wholesome doctrine, that, if heeded, will do thee good in the end.' Which, again, reminds me of what Oliver Cromwell wrote to the Honourable Colonel Hacker at Peebles. 'These : I was not satisfied with your last speech to me about Empson, that he was a better preacher than fighter—or words to that effect. Truly, I think that he that prays and preaches best

will fight best. I know nothing that will give like courage and confidence as the knowledge of God in Christ will. I pray you to receive Captain Empson lovingly.'

6. The standing ministry in Mansoul was endowed also; but I cannot imagine what the court of teinds would make of the instrument of endowment. As it has been handed down to us, that old ecclesiastical instrument reads more like a lesson in the parish minister's class for the study of Mysticism than a writing for a learned lord to adjudicate upon. Here is the Order of Council: 'Therefore I, thy Prince, give thee, My servant, leave and licence to go when thou wilt to My fountain, My conduit, and there to drink freely of the blood of My grape, for My conduit doth always run wine. Thus doing, thou shalt drive from thine heart all foul, gross, and hurtful humours. It will also lighten thine eyes, and it will strengthen thy memory for the reception and the keeping of all that My Father's noble secretary will teach thee.' Thus the Prince did put Mr. Conscience into the place and office of a minister to Mansoul, and the chosen and presented man did thankfully accept thereof.

(1) Now, there are at least three lessons taught us here. There is, to begin with, a lesson to all those congregations who are about to choose a minister. Let all those congregations, then, who have had devolved on them the powers of the old patrons,—let them make their election on the same principles that the Prince of Mansoul patronised. Let them choose a probationer who, young though he must be, has the making of a seer in him.

Let them listen for the future seer in his most stammering prayers. Somewhere, even in one service, his conscience will make itself heard, if he has a conscience. Rather remain ten years vacant than call a minister who has no conscience. The parish minister of Mansoul sometimes seemed to be all conscience, and it was this that made his head so full of judgment, his tongue so full of a brave boldness, and his heart so full of holy love. Your minister may be an anointed bishop, he may be a gowned and hooded doctor, he may be a king's chaplain, he may be the minister of the largest and the richest and the most learned parish in the city, but, unless he strikes terror and pain into your conscience every Sabbath, unless he makes you tremble every Sabbath under the eye and the hand of God, he is no true minister to you. As Goodwin says, he is a wooden cannon. As Leighton says, he is a mountebank for a minister.

(2) The second lesson is to all those who are politically enfranchised, and who hold a vote for a member of Parliament. Now, crowds of candidates and their canvassers will before long be at your door besieging it and begging you for your vote for or against an Established church. Well, before Parliament is dissolved, and the canvass commences, look you well into your own heart and ask yourself whether or no the Church of Christ has yet been established there. Ask if Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, has yet set up His throne there, in your heart. Ask your conscience if His laws are recognised and obeyed there. Ask also if His blood has been sprinkled there, and since when.


And, if not, then it needs no seer to tell you what sacrilege, what profanity it is for you to touch the ark of God : to speak, or to vote, or to lift a finger either for or against any church whatsoever. Intrude your wilful ignorance and your wicked passions anywhere else. March up boldly and vote defiantly on questions of State that you never read a sober line about, and are as ignorant about as you are of Hebrew ; but beware of touching by a thousand miles the things for which the Son of God laid down His life. Thrust yourself in, if you must, anywhere else, but do not thrust yourself and your brutish stupidity and your fiendish tempers into the things of the house of God. Let all parish ministers take for their text that day 2 Samuel vi. 6, 7 :—And when they came to Nachon's threshing-floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it ; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah ; and God smote him there for his error ; and there he died by the ark of God.

(3) There is a third lesson here, but it is a lesson for ministers, and I shall take it home to myself.

## XXIV

## A FAST-DAY IN MANSOUL

'Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord your God.'—*Joel*.

N our soft and self-indulgent day the very word 'to fast' has become an out-of-date and an obsolete word. We never have occasion to employ that word in the living language of the present day. The men of the next generation will need to have it explained to them what the Fast-days of their fathers were: when they were instituted, how they were observed, and why they were abrogated and given up. If your son should ever ask you just what the Fast-days of your youth were like, you will do him a great service, and he may live to recover them, if you will answer him in this way. Show him how to take his Cruden and how to make a picture to his opening mind of the Fast-days of Scripture. And tell him plainly for what things in fathers and in sons those fasts were ordained of God. And then for the Fast-days of the Puritan period let him read aloud to you this powerful passage in the *Holy War*. Public preaching and public prayer entered largely into the fasting of the Prophetical and the Puritan periods; and John Bunyan, after Joel, has told us

some things about the Fast-day preaching of his day that it will be well for us, both preachers and people, to begin with, and to lay well to heart.

1. In the first place, the preaching of that Fast-day was 'pertinent' and to the point. William Law, that divine writer for ministers, warns ministers against going off upon Euroclydon and the shipwrecks of Paul when Christ's sheep are looking up to them for their proper food. What, he asks, is the nature, the direction, and the strength of that Mediterranean wind to him who has come up to church under the plague of his own heart and under the heavy hand of God? You may be sure that Boanerges did not lecture that Fast-day forenoon in Mansoul on Acts xxvii. 14. We would know that, even if we were not told what his text that forenoon was. His text that never-to-be-forgotten Fast-day forenoon was in Luke xiii. 7—'Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?' And a very smart sermon he made upon the place. First, he showed what was the occasion of the words, namely, because the fig-tree was barren. Then he showed what was contained in the sentence, to wit, repentance or utter desolation. He then showed also by whose authority this sentence was pronounced. And, lastly, he showed the reasons of the point, and then concluded his sermon. But he was very pertinent in the application, insomuch that he made all the elders and all their people in Mansoul to tremble. Sidney Smith says that whatever else a sermon may be or may not be, it must be interesting if it is to do any good. Now, pertinent preaching is always interesting preaching. Nothing

interests men like themselves. And pertinent preaching is just preaching to men about themselves,—about their interests, their losses and their gains, their hopes and their fears, their trials and their tribulations. Boanerges took both his text and his treatment of his text from his Master, and we know how pertinently The Master preached. His preaching was with such pertinence that the one half of His hearers went home saying, Never man spake like this man, while the other half gnashed at Him with their teeth. Our Lord never lectured on Euroclydon. He knew what was in man and He lectured and preached accordingly. And if we wish to have praise of our best people, and of Him whose people they are, let us look into our own hearts and preach. That will be pertinent to our people which is first pertinent to ourselves. Weep yourself, said an old poet to a new beginner; weep yourself if you would make me weep. ‘For my own part,’ said Thomas Shepard to some ministers from his deathbed, ‘I never preached a sermon which, in the composing, did not cost me prayers, with strong cries and tears. I never preached a sermon from which I had not first got some good to my own soul.’

‘His office and his name agree;  
A shepherd that and Shepard he.’

And many such entries as these occur in Thomas Boston’s golden journal: ‘I preached in Ps. xlii. 5, and mostly on my own account.’ Again: ‘Meditating my sermon next day, I found advantage to my own soul, as also in delivering it on the Sabbath.’

And again: 'What good this preaching has done to others I know not, yet I think myself am not the worse of it.'

2. The preaching of that Fast-day was with great authority also. 'There was such power and authority in that sermon,' reports one who was present, 'that the like had seldom been seen or heard.' Authority also was one of the well-remembered marks of our Lord's preaching. And no wonder, considering who He was. But His ministers, if they are indeed His ministers, will be clothed by Him with something even of His supreme authority. 'Conscience is an authority,' says one of the most authoritative preachers that ever lived. 'The Bible is an authority; such is the Church; such is antiquity; such are the words of the wise; such are hereditary lessons; such are ethical truths; such are historical memories; such are legal saws and state maxims; such are proverbs; such are sentiments, presages, and prepossessions.' Now, the well-equipped preacher will from time to time plant his pulpit on all those kinds of authority, as this kind is now pertinent and then that, and will, with such a variety and accumulation of authority, preach to his people. Thomas Boston preached at a certain place with such pertinence and with such authority that it was complained of him by one of themselves that he 'terrified even the godly.' Let all our young preachers who would to old age continue to preach with interest, with pertinence, and with terrifying authority, among other things have by heart *The Memoirs of Thomas Boston*, 'that truly great divine.'

3. A third thing, and, as some of the people who heard it said of it, the best thing about that sermon was that—‘He did not only show us our sin, but he did visibly tremble before us under the sense of his own.’ Now I know this to be a great difficulty with some young ministers who have got no help in it at the Divinity Hall. Are they, they ask, to be themselves in the pulpit? How far may they be themselves, and how far may they be not themselves? How far are they to be seen to tremble before their people because of their own sins, and how far are they to bear themselves as if they had no sin? Must they keep back the passions that are tearing their own hearts, and fill the forenoon with Euroclydon and other suchlike sea-winds? How far are they to be all gown and bands in the pulpit, and how far sackcloth and ashes? One half of their people are like Pascal in this, that they like to see and hear a man in his pulpit; but, then, the other half like only to see and hear a proper preacher. ‘He did not only show the men of Mansoul their sin, but he did tremble before them under the sense of his own. Still crying out as he preached to them, Unhappy man that I am! that I should have done so wicked a thing! That I, a preacher, should be one of the first in the transgression!’

This you will remember was the Fast-day. And so truly had this preacher kept the Fast-day that the Communion-day was down upon him before he was ready for it. He was still deep among his sins when all his people were fast putting on their beautiful garments. He was ready with the letter

of his action-sermon, but he was not equal to the delivery of it. His colleague, accordingly, whose sense of sin was less acute that day, took the public worship, while the Fast-day preacher still lay sick in his closet at home and wrote thus on the ground: 'I am no more worthy to be called Thy son,' he wrote. 'Behold me here, Lord, a poor, miserable sinner, weary of myself, and afraid to look up to Thee. Wilt Thou heal my sores? Wilt Thou take out the stains? Wilt Thou deliver me from the shame? Wilt Thou rescue me from this chain of sin? Cut me not off in the midst of my sins. Let me have liberty once again to be among Thy redeemed ones, eating and drinking at Thy table. But, O my God, to-day I am an unclean worm, a dead dog, a dead carcass, deservedly cast out from the society of Thy saints. But oh, suffer me so much as to look to the place where Thy people meet and where Thine honour dwelleth. Reject not the sacrifice of a broken heart, but come and speak to me in my secret place. O God, let me never see such another day as this is. Let me never be again so full of guilt as to have to run away from Thy presence and to flee from before Thy people.' He printed more than that, in blood and in tears, before God that Communion-morning, but that is enough for my purpose. Now, would you choose a dead dog like that to be your minister? To baptize and admit your children and to marry them when they grow up? To mount your pulpits every Sabbath-day, and to come to your houses every week-day? Not, I feel sure, if you could help it! Not if you knew it! Not if there was a

minister of proper pulpit manners and a well-ordered mind within a Sabbath-day's journey! 'Like priest like people,' says Hosea. 'The congregation and the minister are one,' says Dr. Parker. 'There are men we could not sit still and hear; they are not the proper ministers for us. There are other men we could hear always, because they are our kith and our kin from before the foundation of the world.' Happy the hearer who has hit on a minister like the minister of Mansoul, and who has discovered in him his everlasting kith and kin. And happy the minister who, owning kith and kin with Boanerges, has two or three or even one member in his congregation who likes his minister best when he likes himself worst.

But what about the fasting all this time? Was it all preaching, and was there no fasting? Well, we do not know much about the fasting of the prophets and the apostles, but the Puritans sometimes made their people almost forget about fasting, and about eating and drinking too, they so took possession of their people with their incomparable preaching. I read, for instance, in Calamy's *Life of John Howe*, that on the public Fast-days, it was Howe's common way to begin about nine in the morning and to continue reading, preaching, and praying till about four in the afternoon. Henry Rogers almost worships John Howe, but John Howe's Fast-days pass his modern biographer's patience; till, if you would see a nineteenth-century case made out against a seventeenth-century Fast-day, you have only to turn to the author of *The Eclipse of Faith* on the author of *Delighting in God*.

And, no doubt, when we get back our Fast-days, we shall leave more of the time to reading pertinent books at home and to secret fasting and to secret prayer, and shall enjoin our preachers, while they are pertinent and authoritative in their sermons, not to take up the whole day with their sermons even at their best. And then, as to fasting, discredited and discarded as it is in our day, there are yet some very good reasons for desiring its return and reinstatement among us. Very good reasons, both for health and for holiness. But it is only of the latter class of reasons that I would fain for a few words at present speak. Well, then, let it be frankly said that there is nothing holy, nothing saintly, nothing at all meritorious in fasting from our proper food. It is the motive alone that sanctifies the means. It is the end alone that sanctifies the exercise. If I fast to chastise myself for my sin ; if I fast to reduce the fuel of my sin ; if I fast to keep my flesh low ; if I fast to make me more free for my best books, for my most inward, spiritual, mystical books—for my Kempis, and my Behmen, and my Law, and my Leighton, and my Goodwin, and my Bunyan, and my Rutherford, and my Jeremy Taylor, and my Shepard, and my Edwards, and suchlike ; if I fast for the ends of meditation and prayer ; if I fast out of sympathy with my Bible, and my Saviour, and my latter end, and my Father's house in heaven—then, no doubt, my fasting will be acceptable with God, as it will certainly be an immediate means of grace to my sinful soul. These altars will sanctify many such gifts. For, who that knows anything at all about himself, about

his own soul, and about the hindrances and helps to its salvation from sin; who that ever read a page of Scripture properly, or spent half an hour in that life which is hidden in God—who of such will deny or doubt that fasting is superseded or neglected to the sure loss of the spiritual life, to the sensible lowering of the religious tone and temper, and to the increase both of the lusts of the flesh and of the mind? It may perhaps be that the institution of fasting as a church ordinance has been permitted to be set aside in order to make it more than ever a part of each earnest man's own private life. Perhaps it was in some ways full time that it should be again said to us, 'Thou, when thou fastest, appear not unto men to fast.' As also, 'Is not this the fast that I have chosen: to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the outcast to thy house?' Let us believe that the form of the Fast-day has been removed out of the way that the spirit may return and fashion a new form for itself. And in the belief that that is so, let us, while parting with our fathers' Fast-days with real regret—as with their pertinent and pungent preaching—let us meantime lay in a stock of their pertinent and pungent books, and set apart particular and peculiar seasons for their sin-subduing and grace-strengthening study.

The short is this. The one real substance and true essence of all fasting is self-denial. And we can never get past either the supreme and absolute duty of that, or the daily and hourly call to that,

as long as we continue to read the New Testament, to live in this life, and to listen to the voice of conscience, and to the voice of God speaking to us in the voice of conscience. Without strict and constant self-denial, no man, whatever his experiences or his pretensions, is a disciple of Jesus Christ, and secret fasting is one of the first, the easiest, and the most elementary exercises of New Testament self-denial. And, besides, the lusts of our flesh and the lusts of our minds are so linked and locked and riveted together that if one link is loosened, or broken, or even struck at, the whole thrall is not yet thrown off indeed, but it is all shaken; it has all received a staggering blow. So much is this the case that one single act of self-denial in the region of the body will be felt for freedom throughout the whole prison-house of the soul. And a victory really won over a sensual sin is already a challenge sounded to our most spiritual sin. And it is this discovery that has given to fasting the place it has held in all the original, resolute, and aggressive ages of the Church. With little or nothing in their Lord's literal teaching to make His people fast, they have been so bent on their own spiritual deliverance, and they have heard and read so much about the deliverances both of body and of soul that have been attained by fasting and its accompaniments, that they have taken to it in their despair, and with results that have filled them in some instances with rapture, and in all instances with a good conscience and with a good hope. You would wonder, even in these degenerate days,—you would be amazed could you be told how many of your own best friends in their stealthy,

smiling, head-anointing, hypocritical way deny themselves this and that sweetness, this and that fatness, this and that softness, and are thus attaining to a strength, a courage, and a self-conquest that you are getting the benefit of in many ways without your ever guessing the price at which it has all been purchased. Now, would you yourself fain be found among those who are in this way being made strong and victorious inwardly and spiritually? Would you? Then wash your face and anoint your head; and, then, not denying it before others, deny it in secret to yourself—this and that sweet morsel, this and that sweet meat, this and that glass of such divine wine. Unostentatiously, ungrudgingly, generous-heartedly, and not ascetically or morosely, day after day deny yourself even in little unthought-of things, and one of the very noblest laws of your noblest life shall immediately claim you as its own. That stealthy and shamefaced act of self-denial for Christ's sake and for His cross's sake will lay the foundation of a habit of self-denial; ere ever you are aware of what you are doing the habit will consolidate into a character; and what you begin little by little in the body will be made perfect in the soul; till what you did, almost against His command and altogether without His example, yet because you did it for His sake and in His service, will have placed you far up among those who have forsaken all, and themselves also, to follow Jesus Christ, Son of Man and Son of God. Only, let this always be admitted, and never for a moment forgotten, that all this is said by permission and not of commandment. Our Lord never fasted as we fast. He had no need.

And He never commanded His disciples to fast. He left it to themselves to find out each man his own case and his own cure. Let no man, therefore, take fasting in any of its degrees, or times, or occasions, on his conscience who does not first find it in his heart. At the same time this may be said with perfect safety, that he who finds it in his heart and then lays it on his conscience to deny himself anything, great or small, for Christ's sake, and for the sake of his own salvation,—he will never repent it. No, he will never repent it.

## XXV

## A FEAST-DAY IN MANSOUL

‘ He brought me into his banqueting house. —*The Song*.



EMMANUEL'S feast-day in the *Holy War* excels in beauty and in eloquence everything I know in any other author on the Lord's Supper. The Song of Solomon stands alone when we sing that song mystically—that is to say, when we pour into it all the love of God to His Church in Israel and all Israel's love to God, and then all our Lord's love to us and all our love back again to Him in return. But outside of Holy Scripture I know nothing to compare for beauty, and for sweetness, and for quaintness, and for tenderness, and for rapture, with John Bunyan's account of the feast that Prince Emmanuel made for the town of Mansoul. With his very best pen John Bunyan tells us how upon a time Emmanuel made a feast in Mansoul, and how the townsfolk came to the castle to partake of His banquet, and how He feasted them on all manner of outlandish food—food that grew not in the fields of Mansoul; it was food that came down from heaven and from His Father's house. They drank also of the water that was made wine, and, altogether, they were very merry and at home with their Prince. There was music

also all the time at the table, and man did eat angels' food, and had honey given him out of the rock. And then the table was entertained with some curious and delightful riddles that were made upon the King Himself, upon Emmanuel His Son, and upon His wars and doings with Mansoul; till, altogether, the state of transportation the people were in with their entertainment cannot be told by the very best of pens. Nor did He, when they returned to their places, send them empty away; for either they must have a ring, or a gold chain, or a bracelet, or a white stone or something; so dear was Mansoul to Him now, so lovely was Mansoul in His eyes. And, going and coming to the feast, O how graciously, how lovingly, how courteously, and how tenderly did this blessed Prince now carry it to the town of Mansoul! In all the streets, gardens, orchards, and other places where He came, to be sure the poor should have His blessing and benediction; yea, He would kiss them; and if they were ill, He would lay His hands on them and make them well. And was it not now something amazing to behold that in that very place where Diabolus had had his abode, the Prince of princes should now sit eating and drinking with all His mighty captains, and men of war, and trumpeters, and with the singing men and the singing women of His Father's court! Now did Mansoul's cup run over; now did her conduits run sweet wine; now did she eat the finest of the wheat, and now drink milk and honey out of the rock! Now she said, How great is His goodness, for ever since I found favour in His eyes, how honourable have I ever been!

1. Now, the beginning of it all was, and the best of it all was, that Emmanuel Himself made the feast. Mansoul did not feast her Deliverer; it was her Deliverer who feasted her. Mansoul, in good sooth, had nothing that she had not first and last received, and it was far more true and seemly and fit in every way that her Prince Himself should in His own way and at His own expense seal and celebrate the deliverance, the freedom, the life, the peace, and the joy of Mansoul. And, besides, what had Mansoul to set before her Prince; or, for the matter of that, before herself? Mansoul had nothing of herself. Mansoul was not sufficient of herself for a single day. And how, then, should she propose to feast a Prince? No, no! the thing was impossible. It was Emmanuel's feast from first to last. Just as it was at the Lord's table in this house this morning. You did not spread the table this morning for your Lord. You did not make ready for your Saviour and then invite Him in. He invited you. He said, This is My Body broken for you, and This is My Blood shed for you; drink ye all of it. And had any one challenged you at the fence door and asked you how one who could not pay his own debts or provide himself a proper meal even for a single day, could dare to sit down with such a company at such a feast as that, you would have told him that he had not seen half your hunger and your nakedness; but that it was just your very hunger and nakedness and homelessness that had brought you here; or, rather, it was all that that had moved the Master of the feast to send for you and to compel you to come here. There was nothing in your mind and in your

mouth more all this day than just that this is the Lord's Supper, and that He had sent for you and had invited you, and had constrained and compelled you to come and partake of it. It was the Lord's Table to-day, and it will be still and still more His table on that great Communion-Day when all our earthly communions shall be accomplished and consummated in heaven.

2. All that Mansoul did in connection with that great feast was to prepare the place where Diabolus at one time had held his orgies and carried on his excesses. Her Prince, Emmanuel, did all the rest; but He left it to Mansoul to make the banqueting-room ready. When our Lord would keep His last passover with His disciples, He said to Peter and John, Go into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water, and he will show you a large upper room furnished and prepared. There is some reason to believe that that happy man had been expecting that message and had done his best to be ready for it. And now he was putting the last touch to his preparations by filling the water-pots of his house with fresh water; little thinking, happy man, that as long as the world lasts that water will be holy water in all men's eyes, and shall teach humility to all men's hearts. And, my brethren, you know that all you did all last week against to-day was just to prepare the room. For the room all last week and all this day was your own heart, and not and never this house of stone and lime made with men's hands. You swept the inner and upper room of your own heart. You swept it and garnished its walls and its floors as

much as in you lay. He, whose the supper really was, told you that He would bring with Him what was to be eaten and drunken to-day, while you were to prepare the place. And, next to the very actual feast itself, and, sometimes, not next to it but equal to it, and even before it and better than it, were those busy household hours you spent, like the man with the pitcher, making the room ready. In plain English, you had a communion before the Communion as you prepared your hearts for the Communion. I shall not intrude into your secret places and secret seasons with Christ before His open reception of you to-day. But it is sure and certain that, just as you in secret entertained Him in your mother's house and in the chambers of her that bare you, just in that measure did He say to you openly before all the watchmen that go about the city and before all the daughters of Jerusalem, Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved. Yes; do you not think that the man with the pitcher had his reward? He had his own thoughts as he furnished, till it was quite ready, his best upper room and carried in those pitchers of water, and handed down to his children in after days the perquisite-skin of the paschal lamb that had been supped on by our Lord and His disciples in his honoured house that night. Yes; was it not amazing to behold that in that very place where sometimes Diabolus had his abode, and had entertained his Diabolonians, the Prince of princes should sit eating and drinking with His friends? Was it not truly amazing?

3. Now, upon the feasting-day He feasted them

with all manner of outlandish food—food that grew not in all the fields of Mansoul; it was food that came down with His Father's court. The fields of Mansoul yielded their own proper fruits, and fruits that were not to be despised. But they were not the proper fruits for that day, neither could they be placed upon that table. They are good enough fruits for their purpose, and as far as they go, and for so long as they last and are in their season. But our souls are such that they outlive their own best fruits; their hunger and their thirst outlast all that can be harvested in from their own fields. And thus it is that He who made Mansoul at first, and who has since redeemed her, has out of His own great goodness provided food convenient for her. He knows with what an outlandish life He has quickened Mansoul, and it is only the part of a faithful Creator to provide for His creature her proper nourishment. What is it? asked the children of Israel at one another when they saw a small round thing, as small as hoar-frost, upon the ground. For they wist not what it was. And Moses said, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your persons. And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. He gave them of the corn of heaven to eat, and man did eat in the wilderness angels' food. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead; but this is the bread of which if any man eat he shall not die. And the bread that I will give is My Flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. And so out-

landish, so supernatural, and so full of heavenly wonder and heavenly mystery was that bread, that the Jews strove among themselves over it, and could not understand it. But, by His goodness and His truth to us this day, we have again, to our spiritual nourishment and growth in grace, eaten the Flesh and drunk the Blood of the Son of God ; a meat that, as He who Himself is that meat has said of it, is meat indeed and drink indeed—as, indeed, we have the witness in ourselves this day that it is. They drank also of the water that was made wine, and were very merry with Him all that day at His table. And all their mirth was the high mirth of heaven ; it was a mirth and a gladness without sin, without satiety, and without remorse.

4. There was music also all the while at the table, and the musicians were not those of the country of Mansoul, but they were the masters of song come down from the court of the King. ‘I love the Lord,’ they sang in the supper room over the paschal lamb—‘I love the Lord because He hath heard my voice and my supplication. Because He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live. What shall I render to the Lord,’ they challenged one another, ‘for all His benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation, and will call upon the name of the Lord.’ ‘Sometimes imagine,’ says a great devotional writer with a great imagination—‘Sometimes imagine that you had been one of those that joined with our blessed Saviour as He sang an hymn. Strive to imagine to yourself with what majesty He looked. Fancy that you had stood by Him surrounded with

His glory. Think how your heart would have been inflamed, and what ecstasies of joy you would have then felt when singing with the Son of God! Think again and again with what joy and devotion you would have then sung had this really been your happy state; and what a punishment you would have thought it to have then been silent. And let that teach you how to be affected with psalms and hymns of thanksgiving.' Yes; and it is no imagination; it was our own experience only this morning and afternoon to join in a music that was never made in this world, but which was as outlandish as was the meat which we ate while the music was being made.

' Bless, O my soul, the Lord thy God,  
And not forgetful be  
Of all His gracious benefits  
He hath bestow'd on thee.  
  
Who with abundance of good things  
Doth satisfy thy mouth;  
So that, ev'n as the eagle's age,  
Renewed is thy youth.'

The 103rd Psalm was never made in this world. Musicians far other than those native to Mansoul made for us our Lord's-Table Psalm.

5. And then, the riddles that were made upon the King Himself, and upon Emmanuel His Son, and upon Emmanuel's wars and all His other doings with Mansoul. And when Emmanuel would expound some of those riddles Himself, oh! how they were lightened! They saw what they never saw! They could not have thought that such rarities could have been couched in so few and such ordinary words. Yea, they did gather that the

things themselves were a kind of portraiture, and that, too, of Emmanuel Himself. This, they would say, this is the Lamb! this is the Sacrifice! this is the Rock! this is the Door! and this is the Way! with a great many other things. At Gaius's supper-table they sat up over their riddles and nuts and sweetmeats till the sun was in the sky. And it would be midnight and morning if I were to show you the answers to the half of the riddles. Take one, for an example, and let it be one of the best for the communion-day. 'In one rare quality of the orator,' says Hugh Miller, writing about his adored minister, Alexander Stewart of Cromarty, 'Mr. Stewart stood alone. Pope refers in his satires to a strange power of creating love and admiration by just "touching the brink of all we hate." Now, into this perilous, but singularly effective department, Mr. Stewart could enter with safety and at will. We heard him, scarce a twelvemonth since, deliver a discourse of singular power on the sin-offering as minutely described by the divine penman in Leviticus. He described the slaughtered animal—foul with dust and blood, its throat gashed across, its entrails laid open and steaming in its impurity to the sun—a vile and horrid thing, which no one could look on without disgust, nor touch without defilement. The picture appeared too vivid; its introduction too little in accordance with a just taste. But this pulpit-master knew what he was all the time doing. "And that," he said, as he pointed to the terrible picture, "that is SIN!" By one stroke the intended effect was produced, and the rising disgust and

horror transferred from the revolting, material image to the great moral evil.' And, in like manner, This is the LAMB! we all said over the mystical riddle of the bread and the wine this morning. This is the SACRIFICE! This is the Door! This is EMMANUEL, GOD WITH US, and made sin for us!

6. In one of his finest chapters, Thomas à Kempis tells us in what way we are to communicate mystically: that is to say, how we are to keep on communicating at all times, and in all places, without the intervention of the consecrated sacramental elements. And John Bunyan, the sweetest and most spiritual of mystics, has all that, too, in this same supreme passage. Every day was a feast-day now, he tells us. So much so that when the elders and the townsmen did not come to Emmanuel, He would send in much plenty of provisions to them. Yea, such delicacies would He send them, and therewith would so cover their tables, that whosoever saw it confessed that the like could not be seen in any other kingdom. That is to say, my fellow-communicants, there is nothing that we experienced and enjoyed in this house this day that we may not experience and enjoy again to-morrow and every day in our own house at home. All the mystics worth the noble name will tell you that all true communicating is always performed and experienced in the prepared heart, and never in any upper room, or church, or chapel, or new heaven, or new earth. The prepared heart of every worthy communicant is the true upper room; it is the true banqueting chamber; it is the true

and the only house of wine. Our Father's House itself, with its supper-table covered with the new wine of the Kingdom—the best of it all will still be within you. Prepare yourselves within yourselves, then, O departing and dispersing communicants. Prepare, and keep yourselves always prepared. And as often as you so prepare yourselves your Prince will come to you every day, and will eat and drink with you, till He makes every day on earth a day of heaven already to you. See if He will not; for, again and again, He who keeps all His promises says that He will.

## XXVI

## EMMANUEL'S LIVERY

'And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.'—*John*.



THE Plantagenet kings of ancient England had white and scarlet for their livery; white and green was the livery of the Tudors; the Stuarts wore red and yellow; while blue and scarlet colours adorn to-day the House of Hanover. And the Prince of the kings of the earth, He has his royal colours also, and His servants have their badge of honour and their blazon also. Then He commanded that those who waited upon Him should go and bring forth out of His treasury those white and glittering robes, that I, He said, have provided and laid up in store for my Mansoul. So the white garments were fetched out of the treasury and laid forth to the eyes of the people. Moreover, it was granted to them that they should take them and put them on, according, said He, to your size and your stature. So the people were all put into white—into fine linen, clean and white. Then said the Prince, This, O Mansoul, is My livery, and this is the badge by which Mine are known from the servants of others. Yea, this livery is that which I grant to all them that are Mine, and without which

no man is permitted to see My face. Wear this livery, therefore, for My sake, and, also, if you would be known by the world to be Mine. But now can you think how Mansoul shone ! For Mansoul was fair as the sun, clear as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners.

White, then, and whiter than snow, is the very livery of heaven. A hundred shining Scriptures could be quoted to establish that. In the first year of Belshazzar, King of Babylon, Daniel had a dream, and visions of his head came to Daniel upon his bed. And, behold, the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool. My beloved, sings the spouse in the Song, is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. Then, again, David in his penitence sings, Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean ; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. And what is it that sets Isaiah at the head of all the prophets ? What but this, that he is the mouth-piece of such decrees in heaven as this : Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. The angel, also, who rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre was clothed in a long white garment. Another evangelist says that his countenance was like lightning and his raiment white as snow, and for fear of him the keepers did quake, and became as dead men. But before that we read that Jesus was transfigured before Peter and James and John on the Mount, and that His face did shine as the

sun, and His raiment was white as the light. And, then, the whole Book of Revelation is written with a pen dipped in heavenly light. The whole book is glistening with the whitest light till we cannot read it for the brightness thereof. And the multitude that no man can number all display themselves before our eyes, clothed with white robes and with palms in their hands, so much so that we sink down under the greatness of the glory, till One with His head and His hairs white like wool, as white as snow, lays His hand upon us, and says to us, Fear not, for, behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.

‘I also saw Mansoul clad all in white,  
And heard her Prince call her His heart’s delight,  
I saw Him put upon her chains of gold,  
And rings and bracelets goodly to behold.  
What shall I say? I heard the people’s cries,  
And saw the Prince wipe tears from Mansoul’s eyes,  
I heard the groans and saw the joy of many;  
Tell you of all, I neither will nor can I.  
But by what here I say you well may see  
That Mansoul’s matchless wars no fable be.’

‘And to her it was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.’ We need no exegesis of that beautiful Scripture beyond that exegesis which our own hearts supply. And if we did need that shining text to be explained to us, to whom could we better go for its explanation than just to John Bunyan? Well, then, in our author’s *No Way to Heaven but by Jesus Christ*, he says: ‘This fine linen, in my judgment, is the

works of godly men; their works that spring from faith. But how came they clean? How came they white? Not simply because they were the works of faith. But, mark, they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. And therefore they are before the throne of God. Yea, therefore it is that their good works stand in such a place.' 'Nor must we think it strange,' says John Howe, in his *Blessedness of the Righteous*, 'that all the requisites to our salvation are not found together in one text of Scripture. I conceive that imputed righteousness is not here meant, but that righteousness which is truly subjected in a child of God and descriptive of him. The righteousness of Him whom we adore as made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him, that righteousness has a much higher sphere peculiar and appropriate to itself. Though this of which we now speak is necessary also to be both had and understood.' Emmanuel's livery, then, is the righteousness of the saints. Emmanuel puts that righteousness upon all His saints; while, at the same time, they put it on themselves; they work it out for themselves, and for themselves they keep it clean. They work it out, put it on, and keep it clean, and yet, all the time, it is not they that do it, but it is Emmanuel that doeth it all in them. The truth is, you must all become mystics before you will admit all the strange truth that is told about Emmanuel's livery. For both heaven and earth unite in this wonderful livery. Nature and grace unite in it. It is woven by the gospel on the loom of the law—till, to tell

you all that is true about it, I neither can nor will I. Albert Bengel tells us that the court of heaven has its own jealous and scrupulous etiquette; and our court journalist and historian, John Bunyan, has supplied his favoured readers with the very card of etiquette that was issued along with Mansoul's coat of livery, and it is more than time that we had attended to that card.

1. The first item then in that etiquette-card ran in these set terms: 'First, wear these white robes daily, day by day, lest you should at some time appear to others as if you were none of Mine. —Signed, EMMANUEL.'

Now, we put on anew every morning the garments that we are to wear every new day. We have certain pieces of clothing that we wear in the morning; we have certain pieces that we wear when we are at our work; and, again, we have certain other pieces that we put on when we go abroad in the afternoon; and, yet again, certain other pieces that we array ourselves in when we go out into society in the evening. After a night in which Mercy could not sleep for blessing and praising God, they all rose in the morning with the sun; but the Interpreter would have them tarry a while, for, said he, you must orderly go from hence. Then said he to the damsel, Take them, and have them into the garden to the bath. Then Innocent the damsel took them, and had them into the garden, and brought them to the bath. Then they went in and washed, yea, they and the boys and all, and they came out of that bath, not only clean and sweet, but also much

enlivened and much strengthened in their joints. So when they came in they looked fairer a deal than when they went out. Then said the Interpreter to the damsel that waited upon those women, Go into the vestry, and fetch out garments for these people. So she went and fetched out white raiment and laid it down before him. And then he commanded them to put it on. It was fine linen, white and clean. Now, therefore, they began to esteem each other better than themselves. For, You are fairer than I am, said one; and, You are more comely than I am, said another. The children also stood amazed to see into what fashion they had been brought. William Law—I thank God, I think, every day I live for that good day to me on which He introduced me to His gifted and saintly servant—well, William Law used every morning after his bath in the morning to put on his livery, piece by piece, in order, and with special prayer. The first piece that he put on, and he put it on every new morning next his heart to wear it all the day next his heart, was gratitude to God. And it was a real, feeling, active, and operative gratitude that he so put on. On each new morning as it came, that good man was full of new gratitude to God. For the sun new from his Almighty Maker's hands he had gratitude. For his house over his head he had gratitude. For his Bible and his spiritual books he had gratitude. For his opportunities of reading and study, as also for ten o'clock in the morning when the widows and orphans of King's Cliffe came to his window, and so on. A grateful heart feeds

itself to a still greater gratitude on everything that comes to it. So it was with William Law, till he wakened the maids in the rooms below with his psalms and his hymns as he went into his vestry and put on his singing robes so early every morning. And then, after his morning hours of study and devotion, Law had a piece of livery that he always put on and never came downstairs to breakfast without it. Other men might put on other pieces; he always clothed himself next to gratitude with humility. Men differ, good men differ, and Emmanuel's livery-men differ in what they put on, at what time, and in what order. But that was William Law's way. You will learn more of his way, and you will be helped to find out a like way for yourselves, if you will become students of his incomparable books. You will find how he put on charity, 1 Cor. thirteenth chapter; and then how, over all, he put on the will of God; till, thus equipped and thus accoutred, he was able to say, as it has seldom been said since it was first said, 'I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my judgment was to me as a robe and as a diadem. The Almighty was then with me, and my children were about me. When I washed my steps with butter, and when the rock poured me out rivers of oil!' So much for that livery-man of Emmanuel, the author of the *Christian Perfection* and the *Spirit of Love*. As for the women's vestry in the Interpreter's House, Matthew Henry saw the thirty-first chapter of the Proverbs hung up on that vestry wall, and Christiana making her morning toilet before it with Mercy beside her.

Who would find a virtuous woman, let him look before that looking-glass for her, and he will be sure to find her and her daughters and her daughters-in-law putting on their white raiment there.

2. 'Secondly, keep your garments always white; for if they be soiled, it is a dishonour to Me. I have a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.' Even in Sardis, with every street and every house full of soil and dishonour to the name of Christ, even in Sardis Emmanuel had some of whom He could boast Himself. Would you not immensely like at the last day to be one of those some in Sardis? Shall it not be splendid when Sardis comes up for judgment to be among those few names that Emmanuel shall then read out of His book, and when, at their few names, two or three men shall step out into the light in His livery? Some of you are in Sardis at this moment. Some of you are in a city, or in a house in a city, where it is impossible to keep your garments clean. And yet, no; nothing is impossible to Emmanuel and His true livery-men. Even in that house where you are, Emmanuel will say over you, I have one there who is thankful to My Father and to Me; thankful to singing every morning where there is little, as men see, to sing for. There is one in that house humble, where humility itself would almost become high-minded. And meek, where Moses himself would have lost his temper. And submissive, where rebelliousness would not have been without excuse. Mark these

few men for Mine, says Emmanuel. Mark them with the ink-horn for Mine. For they shall surely be Mine in that day, and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.

3. 'Wherefore gird your garments well up from the ground.' A well-dressed man, a well-dressed woman, is a beautiful sight. Not over-dressed; not dressed so as to call everybody's attention to their dress; but dressed decorously, becomingly, tastefully. Each several piece well fitted on, and all of a piece, till it all looks as if it had grown by nature itself upon the well-dressed wearer. Be like him — be like her — so runs the third head of the etiquette-card. Be not slovenly and disorderly and unseemly in your livery. Let not your livery be always falling off, and catching on every bush and briar, and dropping into every pool and ditch. Hold yourselves in hand, the instruction goes on. Brace yourselves up. Have your temper, your tongue, your eyes, your ears, and all your members in control. And then you will escape many a rent and many a rag; many a seam and many a patch; many a soil and many a stain. And then also you will be found walking abroad in comeliness and at liberty, while others, less careful, are at home mending and washing and ironing because they went without a girdle when you girt up your garments well off the ground. Wherefore always gird well up the loins of your mind.

4. 'And, fourthly, lose not your robes, lest you walk naked and men see your shame'; that is to say, the supreme shame of your soul. For there is no other shame. There is nothing else in body or

soul to be ashamed about. There is a nakedness, indeed, that our children are taught to cover; but the Bible is a book for men. And the only nakedness that the Bible knows about or cares about is the nakedness of the soul. It was their sudden soul-nakedness that chased Adam and Eve in among the trees of the garden. And it is God's pity for soul-naked sinners that has made Him send His Son to cry to us: 'I counsel thee,' He cries, 'to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear. Behold!' He cries in absolute terror, 'Behold! I come as a thief! Blessed is he that walketh and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.' Were your soul to be stripped naked to all its shame to-morrow; were all your past to be laid out absolutely naked and bare, with all the utter nakedness of your inward life this day; were all your secret thoughts, and all your stealthy schemes, and all your mad imaginations, and all your detestable motives, and all your hatreds like hell, and all your follies like Bedlam to be laid naked—I suppose the horror of it would make you cry to the rocks and the mountains to cover you this Sabbath night, or the weeds of the nearest sea to wrap you down into its depths. It would be hell before the time to you if your soul were suddenly to be stripped absolutely bare of its ragged body, and naked of all the thin integuments of time, and were for a single day to stand naked to its everlasting shame. And it is just because Jesus Christ sees all that as sure as the judgment-day

coming to you, that He stands here to-night and calls to you: I counsel thee! I counsel thee! Before it be too late, I again counsel thee!

5. But the Prince Emmanuel is persuaded better things of all His livery-men, though He thus speaks to them to put them on their guard. Yes, sternly and severely and threateningly as He sometimes speaks, yet, in spite of Himself, His real grace always breaks through at the last. And, accordingly, his fifth command runs thus: But, it runs, if you should sully them, if you should defile them, the which I am greatly unwilling that you should, then speed you to that which is written in My law, that yet you may stand, and not fall before Me and before My throne. Always know this, that I have provided for thee an open fountain to wash thy garments in. Look, therefore, that you wash often in that fountain, and go not for an hour in defiled garments. Let not, therefore, My garments, your garments, the garments that I gave thee be ever spotted by the flesh. Keep thy garments always white, and let thy head lack no ointment.—*Signed in heaven, EMMANUEL.*

## XXVII

## MANSOUL'S MAGNA CHARTA

'A better covenant.'—*Paul.*

**M**AGNA CHARTA is a name very dear to the hearts of the English people. For, ever since that memorable day on which that noble instrument was extorted from King John at the point of the sword, England has been the pioneer to all the other nations of the earth in personal freedom, in public righteousness, in domestic stability, and in foreign influence and enterprise. Runnymede is a red-letter spot, and 1215 is a red-letter year, not only in the history of England, but in the history of the whole modern world. The keystone of all sound constitutional government was laid at that place on that date, and by that great bridge not England only, but after England the whole civilised world has passed over from ages of bondage and oppression and injustice into a new world of personal liberty and security, public equity and good faith, loyalty and peace. All that has since been obtained, whether on the battle-field or on the floor of Parliament, has been little more than a confirmation of Magna Charta or an authoritative comment upon Magna Charta. And if every subsequent law were to be blotted out, yet in Magna Charta the foundations would still remain of a great state and

a free people. 'Here commences,' says Macaulay, 'the history of the English nation.'

Now, after the Prince of Peace had subjugated the rebellious city of Mansoul, He promulgated a proclamation and appointed a day wherein He would renew their Charter. Yea, a day wherein he would renew and enlarge their Charter, mending several faults in it, so that the yoke of Mansoul might be made yet more easy to bear. And this He did without any desire of theirs, even of His own frankness and nobleness of mind. So when He had sent for and seen their old Charter, He laid it by and said, Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. An epitome, therefore, of that new, and better, and more firm and steady Charter take as follows: I do grant of Mine own clemency, free, full, and everlasting forgiveness of all their wrongs, injuries, and offences done against My Father, against Me, against their neighbours and themselves. I do give them also My Testament, with all that is therein contained, for their everlasting comfort and consolation. Thirdly, I do also give them a portion of the self-same grace and goodness that dwells in My Father's heart and Mine. Fourthly, I do give, grant, and bestow upon them freely, the world and all that is therein for their true good; yea, all the benefits of life and death, of things present and things to come. Free leave and full access also at all seasons to Me in My palace, there to make known all their wants to Me; and I give them, moreover, a promise that I shall hear and redress all their grievances. To them and to their right seed after them, I

hereby bestow all these grants, privileges, and royal immunities. All this is but a lean epitome of what was that day laid down in letters of gold and engraven on their doors and their castle gates. And what joy, what comfort, what consolation, think you, did now possess every heart in Mansoul! The bells rang out, the minstrels played, the people danced, the captains shouted, the colours waved in the wind, and the silver trumpets sounded, till every enemy inside and outside of Mansoul was now glad to hide his head.

Our constitutional authors and commentators are wont to take Magna Charta clause by clause, and word by word, and letter by letter. They linger lovingly and proudly over every jot and tittle of that splendid instrument. And you will indulge me this Communion night of all nights of the year if I expatiate still more lovingly and proudly on that great Covenant which our Lord has sealed to us again to-day, and has written again to-day on the walls of our hearts. Moses made haste as soon as the old Charter was read over to him, and nothing shall delay us till we have feasted our eyes, and our ears, and our hearts to-night on the contents of this our new and better covenant.

1. The first article of our Magna Charta is free, full, and everlasting forgiveness of all the wrongs, injuries, and offences we have ever done against God, against our Saviour, against our neighbour, and against ourselves. The English nobles extorted their Charter from their tyrannical king with their sword at his throat, and after he had signed it, he cast himself on the ground and gnawed sticks and

stones in his fury, so mad was he at the men who had so humiliated him. 'They have set four-and-twenty kings over my head,' he gnashed out. How different was it with our Charter! For when we were yet enemies it was already drawn out in our name. And after we had been subdued it would never have entered our fearful hearts to ask for such an instrument. And, even now, after we have entered into its liberty, how slow we are to believe all that is written in our great Charter, and read to us every day out of it. And who shall cast a stone at us for not easily believing all that is so written and read? It is not so easy as you would think to believe in free forgiveness for all the wrongs, injuries, and offences we have ever done. When you try to believe it about yourselves, you will find how hard it is to accept that covenant and always to keep your feet firm upon it. That the forgiveness is absolutely free is its first great difficulty. If it had cost us all we could ever do or suffer, both in this world and in the world to come, then we could have come to terms with our Prince far more easily; but that our forgiveness should be absolutely free, it is that that so staggers us. When I was a little boy I was once wandering through the streets of a large city seeing the strange sights. I had even less Latin in my head that day than I had money in my pocket. But I was hungry for knowledge and eager to see rare and wonderful things. Over the door of a public institution, containing a museum and other interesting things, I tried to read a Latin scroll. I could not make out the whole of the writing; I could only make out one

word, and not even that, as the event soon showed. The word was *gratia*, or some modification of *gratia*, with some still deeper words engraven round about it. But on the strength of that one word I mounted the steps and rang the bell, and asked the porter if I could see the museum. He told me that the cost of admission was such and such. Little as it was, it was too much for me, and I came down the steps feeling that the Latin writing above the door had entirely deceived me. It has not been the last time that my bad Latin has brought me to shame and confusion of face. But Latin, or Greek, or only English, or not even English, there is no deception and no confusion here. Forgiveness is really of free grace. It costs absolutely nothing, the door is open; or, if it is not open, then knock, and it shall be opened, without money and without price.

‘Free and full.’ I could imagine a free forgiveness which was not also full. I could imagine a charter that would have run somehow thus: Free forgiveness and full, up to a firmly fixed limit. Free and full forgiveness for sins of ignorance and even of infirmity and frailty; for small sins and for great sins, too, up to a certain age of life and stage of guilt. Free and full forgiveness up to a certain line, and then, that black line of reprobation, as Samuel Rutherford says. Indeed, it is no imagination. I have felt oftener than once that I was at last across that black line, and gone and lost for ever. But no—

‘While the lamp holds on to burn,  
The greatest sinner may return.’

‘Free, full, and everlasting.’ Pope Innocent the Third came to the rescue of King John and issued a Papal bull revoking and annulling Magna Charta. But neither king, nor pope, nor devil can revoke or annul our new Covenant. It is free, full, and everlasting. If God be for us, who can be against us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2. ‘Free, full, and everlasting forgiveness of all the wrongs, the injuries, and the offences you have done against My Father, Me, your neighbours, and yourselves.’ Now, out of all that let us fix upon this—the wrongs and the injuries we have done to our neighbours. For, as Calvin says somewhere, though our sins against the first table of the law are our worst sins, yet our sins against the second table, that is, against our neighbours, are far better for beginning a scrutiny with. So they are. For our wrongs against our neighbours, when they awaken within us at all, awaken with a terrible fury. Our wrongs against our neighbours wound, and burden, and exasperate an awakened conscience in a fearful way. We come afterwards to say, Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned! But at the first beginning of our repentances it is the wrongs we have done to our neighbours that drive us beside ourselves. What neighbour of yours, then, have you so wronged? Name him; name her. You avoid that name like poison, but it is not poison—it is life and peace. More depends on your often recollecting and often pronouncing that hateful name than you

would believe. More depends upon it than your minister has ever told you. And, then, in what did you so wrong him? Name the wrong also. Give it its Bible name, its newspaper name, its brutal, vulgar, ill-mannered name. Do not be too soft, do not be too courtly with yourself. Keep your own evil name ever before you. When you hear any other man outlawed and ostracised by that same name, say to yourself: Thou, sir, art the man! Put out a secret and a painful skill upon yourself. Have times and places and ways that nobody knows anything about—not even those you have wronged; have times and places and ways they would laugh to be told of, and would not believe it; times, I say, and places and ways for bringing all those old wrongs you once did ever and ever back to mind; as often back and as keen to your mind as they come back to that other mind, which is still so full of the wrong. Even if your victim has forgiven and forgotten you, never you forget him, and never you forgive yourself when you again think of him. Welcome back every sudden and sharp recollection of your wrong-doing. And make haste at every such sudden recollection and fall down on the spot in a deeper compunction than ever before. Do that as you would be a forgiven and full-chartered soul. For, free and full and everlasting as God's forgiveness is, you have no assurance that it is yours if you ever forget your sin, or ever forgive yourself for having done it. 'Forgive yourself,' says Augustine, 'and God will condemn you. But continually arraign and condemn yourself, and God will forgive and acquit and justify you.'

3. 'I give also My holy law and testament, and all that therein is contained, for their everlasting comfort and consolation.' This is not the manner of men, O my God. Kind-hearted men comfort and console those who have suffered injuries and wrongs at our hands, but the kindest-hearted of men harden their hearts and set their faces like a flint against us who have done the wrong. All Syria sympathised with Esau for the loss of his birthright, but I do not read that any one came to whisper one kind word to Jacob on his hard pillow. All the army mourned over Uriah, but all the time David's moisture was dried up like the drought of summer, and not even Nathan came to the King till he could not help coming. All Jericho cried, Avenge us of our adversary! But it was Jesus who looked up and saw Zaccheus and said: Zaccheus, come down; make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house. 'The injuries they have done themselves also,' so runs the very first head of our forgiveness covenant. Ah! yes; O my Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest my heart. Thou knowest that irremediably as I have injured other men, yet in injuring them I have injured myself much more. And much as other men need restitution, reparation, and consolation on my account, my God, Thou knowest that I need all that much more—ten thousand times more. Oh, how my broken heart within me leaps up and thanks Thee for that Covenant. Let me repeat it again to Thy praise: 'Full, free, and everlasting forgiveness of all wrongs, injuries, and offences done by him against his neighbours and against himself.' Who,

who is a God, O my God, who is a God like unto Thee !

4. 'I do also give them a portion of the self-same grace and goodness that dwells in My Father's heart and Mine.' The self-same grace and goodness, that is, that My Father and I have shown to them. That is to say, we shall be made both willing and able to grant to all those men who have wronged us the very same charter of forgiveness that we have had granted to us of God. So that at all those times when we stand praying for forgiveness we shall suspend that prayer till we have first forgiven all our enemies, and all who have at any time and in any way wronged or injured us. Even when we had the Communion cup at our lips to-day, you would have seen us setting it down till we had first gone and been reconciled to our brother. Yes, my brethren, you are His witnesses that He has done it. He has taken you into His covenant till He has made you both able and willing, both willing and able, to grant and to bequeath to others, all that free, full, and everlasting forgiveness and love that He has bequeathed to you. Till under the very last and supreme wrong that your worst enemy can do to you and to yours, you are able and forward to say : Father, forgive him, for he knows not what he has done. Forgive me my debts, you will say, as I forgive my debtors. And always, as you again say and do that, you will on the spot be made a partaker of the Divine Nature, according to the heavenly Charter, 'I do also give them a portion of the self-same grace and goodness that dwells in My Father's heart and in Mine.'

5. 'I do also,' so Mansoul's Magna Charta travels on, 'I do also give, grant, and bestow upon them freely the world and all that is therein for their good; yea, I grant them all the benefits of life and of death, and of things present and things to come.' What a magnificent Charter is that! 'All things are yours: whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours.' What a superb Charter! Only, it is too high for us; we cannot attain to it. Has any human being ever risen to anything like the full faith, full assurance, and full victory of all that in this life? No; the thing is impossible! Reason would fall off her throne. The heart of a man would break with too much joy if he tried to enter into the full belief of all that. No; it hath not entered into the heart of a still sinful man what God hath chartered to them whom He loves. This world, and all that therein is, and then all the coming benefits of life and of death. What benefits do believers receive from Christ at their death? We all drank in the answer to that with our mother's milk, but what is behind the words of that answer no mortal tongue can yet tell. All are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Till, what joy, what comfort, what consolation, think you, did now possess the hearts of the men of Mansoul! The bells rang, the minstrels played, the people danced, the captains shouted, the colours waved in the wind, and the silver trumpets sounded.

6. 'And till the glory breaks suddenly upon you, and as long as you yet live in this life of free grace

I shall give and grant you leave and free access to Me in My palace at all seasons, there to make known all your wants to Me; and I give you, moreover, a promise that I will hear and redress all your grievances.' At all seasons; in season and out of season. There to make known all your wants to Me. And all your grievances. All that still grieves and vexes you. All your wrongs. All your injuries. All that men can do to you. Let them do their worst to you. My grace is sufficient for all your grievances. My goodness in you shall make you more than a conqueror. I undertake to give you before you have asked for it a heart full of free, full, and everlasting forgiveness and forgetfulness of all that has begun to grieve you. No word or deed, written or spoken, of any man shall be able to vex or grieve the spirit that I shall put within you. You will immediately avenge yourselves of your adversaries. You will instantly repay them all an hundredfold. For, when thine enemy hungers, thou shalt feed him; when he is athirst, thou shalt give him drink. For thou shalt not be overcome of evil, but thou shalt overcome evil with good.

7. 'All these grants, privileges, and immunities I bestow upon thee; upon thee, I say, and upon thy right seed after thee.' O Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, give us such a seed! Give us a seed right with Thee! Smite us and our house with everlasting barrenness rather than that our seed should not be right with Thee. O God, give us our children. Give us our children. A second time, and by a far better birth, give us our children

to be beside us in Thy holy Covenant. For it had been better we had never been born ; it had been better we had never been betrothed ; it had been better we had sat all our days solitary unless all our children are to be right with Thee. Let the day perish, and the night wherein it was said, There is a man-child conceived. Let that day be darkness ; let not God regard it from above ; neither let the light shine upon it, unless all our house is yet to be right with God. O my son Absalom ! My son, my son Absalom ! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son ! But thou, O God, art Thyself a Father, and thus hast in Thyself a Father's heart. Hear us, then, for our children, O our Father, for such of our children as are not yet right with Thee ! In season and out of season ; we shall not go up into our bed ; we shall not give sleep to our eyes nor slumber to our eyelids till we and all our seed are right with Thee. And then how we and all our saved seed beside us shall praise Thee and bless Thee above a'l the families on earth or in heaven, and shall say : Unto Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath bestowed upon us a free, full, and everlasting forgiveness, and hath made us partakers of His Divine Nature, to Him be our love and praise and service to all eternity. Amen and Amen !

## XXVIII

EMMANUEL'S LAST CHARGE TO MAN-  
SOUL: CONCERNING THE REMAINDERS  
OF SIN IN THE REGENERATE

' Hold fast till I come.'—*Our Lord.*



HERE are many fine things in Emmanuel's last charge to Mansoul, but by far the best thing is the answer that He Himself there supplies to this deep and difficult question,—to this question, namely, Why original sin is still left to rage in the truly regenerate? Why does our Lord not wholly extirpate sin in our regeneration? What can His reason be for leaving their original sin to dwell in His best saints till the day of their death? For, to use His own sad words about sin in His last charge, nothing hurts us but sin. Nothing defiles and debases us but sin. Why, then, does He not take our sin clean out of us at once? He could speak the word of complete deliverance if He only would. Why, then, does He not speak that word? That has been a mystery and a grief to all God's saints ever since sanctification began to be. And the great interest and the great value of Emmanuel's last charge to Mansoul stands in this, that He here tells us, if not all, then at least some of His reasons for the policy He pursues with us in

our sanctification. Dost thou know, He asks, as He stands on His chariot steps, surrounded with His captains on the right hand and the left—Dost thou know why I at first did, and do still, suffer sin to live and dwell and harbour in thy heart? And then, after an *O yes!* for silence, the Prince began and thus proceeded:

1. Dost thou ask at Me why I and My Father have seen it good to allow the dregs of thy sinfulness still to corrupt and to rot in thine heart? Dost thou ask why, amid so much in thee that is regenerate, there is still so much more that is unregenerate? Why, while thou art, without controversy, under grace, indwelling sin still so festers and so breaks out in thee? Dost thou ask that? Then, attend, and before I go away to come again I will try to tell thee, if, indeed, thou art able and willing to bear it. Well, then, be silent while I tell thee that I have left all that of thy original sin in thee to tempt thee, to try thee, to humble thee, and to thrust, day and night, upon thee, what is still in thine heart. To humble thee, take knowledge, take warning, and take forethought. To make thee humble, and to keep thee humble. To hide pride from thee, and to lay thee all thy days on earth in the dust of death. I tell thee this day that in all thy past life I have ordered and administered all My providences toward thee to humble thee and to prove thee, and to make thee dust and ashes in thine own eyes. And I go away to carry on from heaven this same intention of My Father's and Mine toward thee. We shall try thee as silver is tried. We shall sift thee as wheat is sifted. We shall

search thee as Jerusalem is searched with lighted candles. I tell thee the truth, I shall bend from heaven all My power which My Father has given Me, and all My wisdom, and all My love, and all My grace. What to do, dost thou think? What to do but to make thee to know and to acknowledge the plague of thine own heart. The deceitfulness, that is, the depth of wickedness, and the abominableness, past all words, of thine own heart. I do not ascend to My Father, with all things in My hand, to make thy seat soft, and thy cup sweet, and thy name great, and thy seed multiplied. I have far other predestinations before Me for thee. I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and it is to everlasting life that I am leading thee. And thou must let Me lead thee through fire and through water if I am to lead thee to heaven at last. I shall have to utterly kill all self-love out of thy heart, and to plant all humility in its place. Many and dreadful discoveries shall I have to make to thee of thy profane and inhuman self-love and selfishness. Words will fail thee to confess all thy selfishness in thy most penitent prayer. Thy towering pride of heart also, and thy so contemptible vanity. As for thy vanity, I shall so overrule it that double-minded men about thee shall make thee and thy vanity their sport, their jest, and their prey. And I shall not leave thee, nor discharge Myself of My work within thee, till I see thee loathing thyself and hating thyself and gnashing thy teeth at thyself for thy envy of thy brother, thy envy concerning his house, his wife, and his man-servant, and his maid-servant, and his ox, and his ass, and every-

thing that is his. Thou shalt find something in thee that shall allow thee to see thine enemy prosper, but not thy friend. Something that shall keep thee from thy sleep because of his talents, his name, his income, and his place which I have given him above thee, beside thee, and always in thy sight. It will be something also that shall make his sickness, his decay, his defamation, and his death sweet to thee, and his prosperity and return to life bitter to thee. Thou shalt have to confess something in thyself—whatever its nature and whatever its name—something that shall make thee miserable at good news, and glad and enlarged and full of life at evil tidings. It will be something also that shall give a long life in thy evil heart to anger, and to resentment, and to retaliation, and to revenge. For after years and years thou shalt still have it in thine heart to hate and to hurt that man and his house, because long ago he left thy side, thy booth in the market, thy party in the state, and thy church in religion. As I live, swore Emmanuel, standing up on the step of His ascending chariot, I shall show thee thyself. I shall show thee what an unclean heart is and a wicked. I shall teach to thee what all true saints shudder at when they are let see the plague of their own hearts. I shall show thee, as I live, how full of pride, and hate, and envy, and ill-will a regenerate heart can be; and how a true-born man of God may still love evil and hate good; may still rejoice in iniquity and pine under the truth. I shall show thee, also, what thou wilt not as yet believe, how thy best friend cannot trust his good name with thee; such a sweet morsel to thee shall

be the mote in his eye and the spot on his praise. Yes, I shall show thee that I did not die on the cross for nothing when I died for thee; when I went out to Calvary a shame and a spitting, an out-cast and a curse for thee! Thou shalt yet arise up and fall down in thy sin and shalt justify all my thorns, and nails, and spears, and the last drop of My blood for thee! Yea, thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, and to know what was in thine heart, and whether thou wouldest keep His commandments or no.

2. It is also, the still tarrying Prince proceeded—it is also to keep thee wakeful and to make thee watchful. Now, what conceivable estate could any man be put into even by his Maker and Redeemer more calculated to call forth wakefulness and watchfulness than to have one half of his heart new and the other half old? To have one half of his heart garrisoned by the captains of Emmanuel, and the other half still full of the spies and the scouts and the emissaries of hell? Nay, to have the great bulk of his heart still full of sin and but a small part of his heart here and there under grace and truth? Here is material for fightings without and fears within with a vengeance! If it somehow suits and answers God's deep purposes with His people to teach them watchfulness in this life, then here is a field for watchfulness, a field of divine depth and scope and opportunity. There used to be a divinity question set in the schools in these terms: Where, in the regenerate, lieth sin its

lodging-place? For that sin does still lodge in the regenerate is too abundantly evident both from Scripture and from experience. But where it so lodges is the question. The Dominican monks, and some others, were of opinion that original sin is to be found only in the inferior part of the soul, but not in the mind or the will. Which, I suppose, we shall soon find contrary both to Scripture and reason and experience. Old Andrew Gray speaks feelingly and no less truly concerning the heart, when he says, 'I think,' he says, 'that if all the saints since Adam's day, and who shall be to the end of the world, had but one deceitful heart to guide they would misguide it.' What a plot of God, then, it is to seat grace, a little saving grace, in the midst of such a sea of corruption as a human heart is, and then to set a sinful man to watch over that spark and to keep the boiling pollutions of his own heart from extinguishing that spark! Well may Paul exclaim: Yea, what carefulness it calls forth in us; yea, what indignation; yea, what fear; yea, what vehement desire; yea, what zeal; yea, what revenge! And, knowing to what He has left our hearts, well may Emmanuel say to us from His ascending steps, 'Watch ye, therefore; and what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch!'

3. It is to keep thee watchful and to teach thee war also, the Prince went on. Bishop Butler is about the last author that we would think of going to for light on any deep and intricate question in the evangelical and experimental life. But Butler is so deeply seen into much of the heart of man, as also into many of the ways of God, that even here

he has something to say to the point. 'It is vain to object,' he says in his sober and sobering way, 'that all this trouble and danger might have been saved us by our being made at once the creatures and the characters which we were to be. For we experience that what we are to be is to be the effect of what we shall do. And that the conduct of nature is not to save us trouble and danger, but to make us capable of going through trouble and danger, and to put it upon us to do it.' The Apostle Peter has the same teaching in a passage too little attended to, in which he tells us that we are set here to work out our own salvation, and that our salvation will just be what, with fear and trembling, or, as Butler says, with trouble and danger, we work out. No man, let all men understand, is to have his salvation thrust upon him. No man need expect to waken up at the end of an idle, indifferent, inattentive life and find his salvation superinduced upon all that. No man shall wear the crown of everlasting life who has not for himself won it. As every man soweth to the Spirit so also shall he reap. As a soldier warreth, so shall he hear it said to him, Well done. And as a sinner keeps his heart with all diligence, and holds it fast till his King comes, so shall he hear it said to him, Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. If thy sins, then, are left in thee to teach thee war, O poor saint of God, then take to thee the whole armour of God; thou knowest the pieces of it, and where the armoury is, and, having done all, stand!

4. And dost thou know, O Mansoul, that it is all

to try thy love also? Now, how, just how, do the remainders of sin in the regenerate try their love? Why, surely, in this way. If we really loved sin at the deepest bottom of our hearts, and only loved holiness on the surface, would we not in our deepest hearts close with sin, give ourselves up to it, and make no stand at all against it? Would we not in our deepest and most secret hearts welcome it, and embrace it, look out for it with desire and delight, and part with it with regret? But if, as a matter of fact, we at our deepest and most hidden heart turn from sin, flee from it, fight against it, rejoice when we are rid of it, and have horror at the return of it,—what better proof than that could Christ and His angels have that at bottom we are His and not the devil's? And that grace, at bottom, has our hearts, and not sin; heaven, and not hell? The apostle's protesting cry is our cry also; we also delight in the law of God after our most inward man. For, after our saddest surprises into sin, after its worst outbreaks and overthrows, such all the time were our reluctances, recalcitrations, and resistances, that, swept away as we were, yet all the time, and after it was again over, it was with some good conscience that we said to Christ that He knew all things, and that He knew that we loved Him.

'O benefit of ill! now I find true  
That better is by evil still made better;  
And ruined love, when it is built anew,  
Grows fairer than at first, more strong, far greater,  
So I return rebuked to my content,  
And gain by ill thrice more than I have spent.'

Yes; it is a sure and certain proof how truly we

love our dearest friend, that, after all our envy and ill-will, yet it is as true as that God is in heaven that, all the time, maugre the devil of self that remains in our heart,—after he has done his worst—we would still pluck out our eyes for our friend and shed our blood. I have no better proof to myself of the depth and the divineness of my love to my friend than just this, that I still love him, and love him more tenderly and loyally, after having so treacherously hurt him. And my heavenly friends and my earthly friends, if they will still have me, must both be content to go into the same bundle both of my remaining enmity and my increasing love; my remainders of sin, and my slow growth in regeneration. So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me? And he said unto Him, Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee!

5. And, to sum up all—more than your humility, more than your watchfulness, more than your prayerfulness, more than to teach you war, and more than to try your love, the dregs and remainders of sin have been left in your regenerate heart to exalt and to extol the grace of God. In Emmanuel's very words, it has all been to make

you a monument of God's mercy. I put it to yourselves, then, ye people of God: does that not satisfy you for a reason, and for an explanation, and for a justification of all your shame and pain, and of all your bondage and misery and wretchedness since you knew the Lord? Is there not a heart in you that says, Yes! it was worth all my corruption and pollution and misery to help to manifest forth and to magnify the glory of the grace of God? You seize on Emmanuel's word that you are a monument of mercy. Somehow that word pleases and reposes you. Yes, that is what out of all these post-regeneration years you are. You would have been a monument to God's mercy had you, like the thief on the cross, been glorified on the same day on which you were first justified. But it will neither be the day of your justification nor the day of your glorification that will make you the greatest of all the monuments that shall ever be raised to the praise of God's grace; it will be the days of your sanctification that will do that. Paul was a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious at his conversion, but he had to be a lifetime in grace and an apostle above all the twelve before he became the chiefest of sinners and the most wretched of saints. And though your first forgiveness was, no doubt, a great proof of the grace of God, yet it was nothing, nothing at all, to your forgiveness to-day. You had no words for the wonder and the praise of your forgiveness to-day. You just took to your lips the cup of salvation and let that silent action speak aloud your monumental praise. You were a sinner at your regeneration,

else you would not have been regenerated. But you were not then the chief of sinners. But now. Ah, now ! Those words, the chief of sinners, were but idle words in Paul's mouth. He did not know what he was saying. For, what has horrified and offended other men when it has been spoken with bated breath to them about envy, and hate, and malice, and revenge, and suchlike remainders of hell, all that has been a breath of life and hope to you. It has been to you as when Christian, in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, heard a voice in the darkness which proved to him that there was another sinner at the mouth of hell besides himself. There is no text that comes oftener to your mind than this, that whoso hateth his brother is a murderer ; and, communicant as you are, you feel and you know and you are sure that there are many men lying in lime waiting the day of judgment to whom it would be more tolerable than for you were it not that you are to be at that day the highest monument in heaven or earth to the redeeming, pardoning, and saving grace of God. Yes, this is the name that shall be written on you ; this is the name that shall be read on you of all who shall see you in heaven ; this name that Emmanuel pronounced over Mansoul that day from His ascending chariot-steps, a very Spectacle of wonder, and a very Monument of the mercy and the grace of God.



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